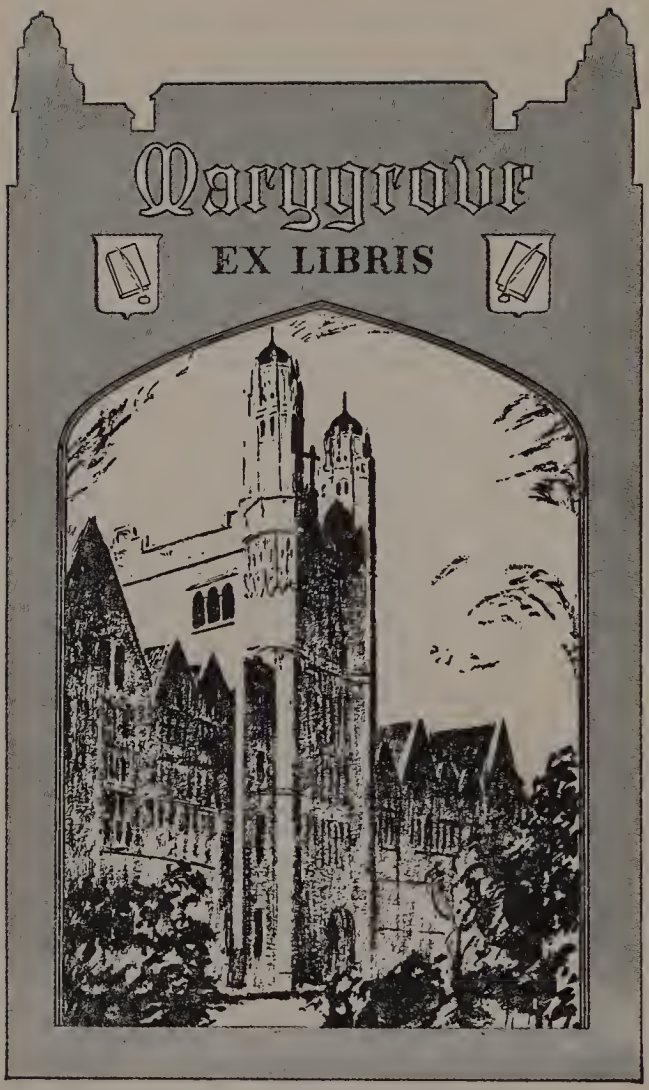
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ST. PAUL

THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES

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X

ST. PAUL

THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES

BY

ABBÉ TRICOT

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. W. REES

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PREFACE

No figure in the history of the first preaching of the Gospel stands out in such strong relief as that of St. Paul, the missionary of the pagans. No doubt we possess a good deal of information about this or that member of the Apostolic body, in particular about Peter, about James and John the sons of Zebedee, about James the brother of the Lord, but nevertheless we cannot attain to a comprehensive grasp of their activity; a large portion of their lives remains, if not entirely unknown to us, at least uncertain and obscure, as if their work, with the exception of a few important points, had been merely corporate and anonymous. In the case of several other Apostles, any attempt to fix their lineaments, or to retrace the history of their lives remains a failure, owing to the absence of documents, or to their disheartening scantiness.

Fortunately it is quite otherwise with St. Paul. We have information of the very first order about him, his deeds and his exploits, his thoughts and his character. In the first place there are preserved a certain number of his letters, addressed for the most part either to societies which he had founded and whose progress he directed from a distance, or to dearly loved disciples whom he had begotten to the Christian life and whom he guided in the exercise of their pastoral office. This correspondence in its variety and vividness has preserved for us a faithful picture of the personality of the

Apostle. In these pages poured straight from his heart, written with a pen often trembling with feeling, almost all born of the circumstances of the moment, composed usually in haste and always without the least art, the spirit of St. Paul is seen as in a perfect mirror.

In the second place, it has come about providentially that St. Luke, one of the most faithful companions of the tireless missionary, has left us in the Acts of the Apostles almost a complete biography of his master. More than any other man, Luke, "the beloved physician," [1] "the inseparable friend of Paul and his fellow-worker in the Gospel" as St. Irenæus called him in the second century, had been initiated into the thoughts, the projects, the preoccupations, and the secret feelings of his master and friend. This prudent and conscientious historian was able better than anyone else to inquire and inform himself before composing the story of the achievements of his principal hero. Thus the Epistles illustrate the Acts, just as the Acts completes the Epistles, of which it is the natural frame.

Thanks to these authentic documents, the historian can in perfect security attempt a reconstruction of the life and thought of him who played a leading rôle in the diffusion of the Gospel throughout the pagan world, and whose work was of decisive importance during those years when the primitive Church was organizing its first conquests.

Nevertheless the material furnished by the New Testament alone would not be sufficient for one who wished to make the great Apostle live again, and to

[1] Col. iv. 14.

estimate the scope of his influence. We must in addition have recourse to the profane authorities which reflect the social, religious, and moral state of the Greco-Roman world, as it existed at the time when St. Paul approached it in order to sow in pagan soil the seed of the Gospel. A knowledge of the environment helps us immensely to understand the history of that marvellous harvest, due in greater part to the personal activity of the bold missionary. It enables us also to carry still further the psychological analysis of his character, of his thought, and of his method of evangelization—so true is it that a man's work depends very much on the conditions under which it is accomplished.

Before entering on the study of St. Paul's teaching then, we must follow him step by step in the history of his life from his birth at Tarsus till the hour of his martyrdom under the walls of Rome near the road to Ostia. The safest and most fruitful method is always to go from the better known to the less known, from the simpler to the more complex. In order to be able to follow the thinker and theologian to the utmost heights and depths of his doctrinal teaching, it is indispensable to have first lived in his company; to have journeyed with him along the roads of Syria, of Asia Minor, and of Greece; to have listened to him as an attentive and humble disciple. This prolonged intercourse will produce a natural sympathy which will at last give us access to his mind and his soul. Nobody will ever know what St. Paul was if he has never loved him.

The character of the series of which the present volume forms a part, forbade the author to think of

writing a detailed and exhaustive account of St. Paul. In order to keep within the limits imposed upon him he has contented himself with giving a simple sketch of the Apostle's life. In tracing again, after so many others, the picture of the external activity of the man who was par excellence the missionary of Christ in the Greco-Roman world, he has only aimed at setting in relief the dominant lines and most striking characteristics of this apostolate.

It would have been interesting to devote a considerable space to the theological teaching of St. Paul. But that idea has had to be given up in order not to pass beyond the prescribed limits, and also because another volume of the same series, devoted to the theology of the New Testament, gives a systematic exposition of Pauline doctrine.

For the same reason—the scope of this biographical study being fixed in advance—it has been found necessary to refrain from discussing texts, from quoting divergent opinions on controversial points, from giving detailed bibliographical references, and in short from any additions which did not appear strictly essential.

With regard to the chronology of St. Paul's apostolate, the reader will find at the end of the volume a condensed table with an indication of the dates judged most probable by the author.

ST. PAUL

CHAPTER I

INFANCY: IN THE GHETTO AT TARSUS

Being circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, according to the law, a Pharisee. (Phil. iii. 5.)

In the first century of our era Tarsus was one of the most prosperous and most celebrated cities of Asia Minor. Admirably situated in close proximity to the coast of Cilicia between the mighty chain of the Taurus and the Mediterranean, this city had developed rapidly under the Seleucids, who, for more than three centuries, ruled over the country. Washed by the fresh and limpid waters of the Cydnus, which flowed through its centre, protected by thick walls, beautified by the Antiochi of Syria, and seated like a queen in the midst of a fertile plain, it was a magnificent sight, and its citizens were proud of it. On the north and west, the high mountains, rising very near with snow-covered summits, closed the view. To the east there stretched, as far as the eye could see, meadows and fields intersected by ditches and water-channels; to the south, only a dozen miles away, there was the blue sea.

When the Seleucid dynasty disappeared, the city

passed under the dominion of the Romans, who gradually made themselves masters of all the coastal region. Pompey organized the administration of the new province of Cilicia, with Tarsus as its capital (in 64 B.C.). The inhabitants could not but feel gratitude for the benevolent treatment they received from Cæsar, Antony, and Augustus. Having been declared a free city, Tarsus enjoyed numerous privileges, among others, exemption from the tribute. At the time of the reorganization of the provinces of the empire under Augustus, Cilicia was attached to the province of Syria, the capital of which was Antioch the Great.

The prosperity of Tarsus had its principal source in the industrial and commercial activity of its inhabitants. The population, which for the greater part belonged to the Greek and Aramaic races, had from an early date been engaged in trade. The geographical position of the city admirably suited the needs of an exchange. An immense basin communicating with the sea served as a port for the vessels which brought merchandise; to the east, a great road placed Tarsus in direct communication with Antioch and the Euphrates valley; another carriage-road crossed the Taurus chain by the defile known as the Cilician Gates, emerged on the high plateaux of Asia Minor towards the west, and enabled caravans to move freely between the capital of Cilicia and the great markets of the interior. With its souks filled with merchandise and its khans crowded with Greek and Oriental traders, the city was familiar with prosperity, and riches abounded in it.

At the same time Tarsus was still prouder of its learning than of its wealth; prouder of its schools

than of its commerce. The love of letters and the appetite for knowledge were so strong there that Tarsus made a very good appearance by the side of its two intellectual rivals, Athens and Alexandria. If we may believe a contemporary of St. Paul's, the geographer Strabo, Tarsus even beat its competitors. No other city, according to him, possessed so many schools, or could cite such illustrious teachers. Grammarians, rhetoricians, philosophers, learned men of all sorts, abounded in it, and history has preserved the names of several of them. Strabo notes the curious fact that very few foreign students were seen in this vast university, and that the professors were all Tarsians. On the other hand, Tarsians were to be found in the professorial chairs even at Rome and Alexandria—so great was the number of cultured men who issued from this intellectual hive, which in fact supplied the whole empire.

Lastly, all the religions of the Greek world and of the Oriental world were represented there, as if the gods themselves had made it their rendezvous. There Ormuzd was next-door neighbour to Heracles, Athena to Cybele, Mithras to Baaltars, Adonis to Isis. There were gods from Persia, from Greece, from Phrygia, from Syria, and from Egypt—some brought by foreign conquerors, others by merchants, others by legionaries or mercenaries, others finally by slaves bought in distant markets, or by pilgrims on their way.

Among all these divinities, Baaltars, venerated under the name of Sandon, seems to have occupied the first place in the motley pantheon. He was a god of vegetation. Every year, in the course of a great feast celebrated in his honour, a tree, the

symbol of his death, was burned on a funeral-pyre, while another tree, the type of his reviving life, was set up and planted on the site of the first. Thus Tarsus offered an exhibition of all the Greco-Oriental religions.

It was in this city, so profoundly Hellenized, Greek in language and in spirit, at once cultured and commercial, tolerant and even sympathetic towards the most diverse cults, that there was born round about the year 8 of our era the man who was destined to be the apostle and doctor of the Gentiles.[1]

[1] The year of St. Paul's birth cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. The two sole clues we possess are very vague, and their sense must not be pressed too much in order to reconcile them. St. Luke calls Saul a *young man* (Acts vii. 58) at the moment of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, an event which belongs to about the year 36. In his letter to Philemon, written round about the year 62, Paul applies to himself the epithet, *old man* (in verse 9).

For St. Paul's life as a whole we have four points established—these are four events whose approximate date we can fix, i.e., Paul's conversion in 36, his meeting with the proconsul Gallio at Corinth in 52 or 53, the exchange of Felix for Festus as procurator of Judæa in 59 or 60, the martyrdom at Rome in 67. Thanks to these dates which form landmarks for the apostolic career of St. Paul, we succeed in establishing a detailed chronology in which the risks of error are reduced to a minimum. Nevertheless, a comparison of the chronological tables given by the different historians of the apostolic age reveals appreciable divergences on several points.

Father F. Prat, in his masterly work entitled *The Theology of Saint Paul*, discusses at length this question of dates (Eng. trans. Vol. I, p. 397). The conclusions at which he arrives are founded on sufficiently solid arguments to warrant our regarding them as offering on the whole the maximum of probability.

Maurice Goguel (*Introduction au Nouveau Testament*, Vol. IV, Part 1, pp. 81-115, Paris, 1925) may also be consulted on this question of chronology.

There was a strong Jewish community at Tarsus. It was many centuries now since the children of Israel had begun their exodus from Palestine; some had been driven from their homes by the successive wars which ravaged and ruined the country; others had been carried away as captives by the invaders and had never returned; others again had been drawn away from Palestine by the Ptolemies of Egypt, or the Seleucids of Syria, who treated them with kindness in their countries; a certain number, finally, had only followed an instinct developed by trade, and had emigrated in search of fortune. At the beginning of the Christian era, Jews are to be found more or less everywhere; in Mesopotamia, in Macedonia, in Greece, in Asia Minor, in Syria, in Egypt, in Cyrenaica, in proconsular Africa, Italy, etc. The whole empire was sprinkled over with their colonies. In places the population of these ghettos reached an imposing figure: 50,000 for Rome at the time of the Emperor Tiberius; 200,000 for Alexandria at the same epoch. This expansion should not surprise us when we consider the prolific character of the race.[2]

These Jews of the Dispersion or of the Diaspora, as they were called, lived in a close union with one another in the towns in which they had established themselves, grouped in their own separate quarter, the ghetto. In its temporal aspect, each colony formed a community, regularly organized with its own governors, magistrates, customs and tribunals. Spiritually, the unity was not less complete: all came to the synagogue for the religious meetings; there was instruction, exhortation, and united prayer

[2] See Jean Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain,* Paris, 1914, Vol. I, pp. 179-213.

in the "house of teaching." But above all, there was the common faith, faith in monotheism, faith in the glorious destinies of Israel, faith in the Messias promised of old by the Eternal, and always expected. Although loyal citizens of the countries which had given them shelter, the Jews of the Dispersion had their hearts at Jerusalem, and their eyes instinctively turned to holy Sion. Thus community of race and religion attached each individual to the body of the nation by living and indestructible ties. No doubt these exiles lived in fair harmony with the pagan populations among whom they found themselves; no doubt, too, there existed among them differences of practice or of opinion, but on the whole they preserved intact the patrimony of ideas and traditions inherited from their Palestinian ancestors. Even in the cases of an apparent mixture of the two elements, Jewish and pagan, as at Alexandria, a close observer could easily satisfy himself that there was no fusion. At the utmost, in certain localities, especially in Egypt, there would be found among the Jews of the Dispersion less hostility or hatred towards the Gentile, than among their brethren of Judæa or of Galilee, less squeamishness about contaminating contacts, and less repugnance to Hellenic civilization. The Jewish spirit everywhere remained the same.

At the time when Jesus, at the age of twelve to fifteen,[3] was living unheard of at Nazareth, St. Paul came into the world in one of those Israelite families of the Dispersion in which the beliefs and traditions of the Fathers were honoured. He himself pro-

[3] The date of the birth of Jesus cannot be determined with absolute precision. One thing is certain, that he was born before the death of Herod the Great, which happened between September of 5 B.C. and April of 4 B.C.

claimed later that he was "a Hebrew born of Hebrews," "of the seed of Abraham," "of the stock of Israel," "of the tribe of Benjamin":[4] all so many advantages according to the flesh, which he recalled not without pride, and also, we may add, not without emotion, for he always loved passionately the men of his own race and blood.

We do not know for how many generations St. Paul's family had been settled at Tarsus, and we cannot place any great reliance on a fourth century tradition, recorded by St. Jerome, according to which Giscala in Galilee was the place of their origin. Everything indicates that the material situation of his parents was that of artisans who made a comfortable livelihood. There was at that time a prosperous industry at Tarsus: from the hair of the Taurus goats a cloth was woven, coarse no doubt, but waterproof and almost indestructible, and known as *cilicium*, because it was made in the capital of Cilicia. This rough material was used in the manufacture of tents, mats, shepherds' cloaks, and the great-coats of travellers; it was only necessary to sew pieces of it together. St. Paul's father was a weaver or "tent-maker,"[5] for his son exercised this trade, and it is known that in the Jewish world a handicraft was passed on like a legacy from father to son. In a centre like Tarsus, which supplied a wide area, such a trade must have been as profitable as it was regular.

Between the extremes of riches and misery, there is room for a respectable competence such as would suffice for the needs of a home. Unless St. Paul's family had been in such a situation, it is hard to

[4] Acts xxii. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5.
[5] Acts xviii. 3.

understand how the father could have enjoyed the double privilege, which the son inherited on coming into the world. In the first place he was a "citizen of Tarsus,"[6] and this quality would mean an honourable position among the inhabitants of the great city, for all of them did not possess it; for this purpose a public deed attesting the right of citizenship was necessary.[7] Next, he had the rank of "Roman citizen,"[8] which carried with it considerable privileges and advantages. Such an honour had to be paid for very heavily in cases where it was not earned by remarkable services, for at this period Rome only granted it grudgingly and with difficulty.[9] Roman citizens constituted a sort of caste, enjoying numerous immunities and favours, all the more appreciated because they were the monopoly of a small number. It is very probable that St. Paul's father had himself inherited his Roman citizenship from his ancestors.

If he enjoyed some consideration among the Tarsians in general in virtue of this double title, he enjoyed still more in the ghetto because of his orthodoxy as a Pharisee. His distance from Jerusalem had only intensified his zeal for the Law of Moses and his devotion to its observance. Many earnest Pharisees were to be found outside Palestine.[10] He was one of them. Later on, St.

[6] Acts xxi. 39.

[7] In the time of Dion Chrysostom, about A.D. 100, the right of citizenship cost at Tarsus 500 drachmæ (nearly £20), and certain classes of artisans, such as the leather workers, could not afford it.

[8] Acts xvi. 37; xxii. 25, 28.

[9] "As for me, I bought this (Roman) citizenship very dearly," as the tribune Lysias said (Acts xxii. 28).

[10] Math. xxiii. 15.

Paul awarded his father a certificate of absolute loyalty to the most rigid Jewish ideals by proclaiming himself "the son of a Pharisee"[11] and by declaring that his early education was in conformity with the principles of the purest Pharisaism.[12]

It was in this family saturated and penetrated with the most genuine Jewish spirit that St. Paul's eyes first opened to the light. Eight days after his birth, in accordance with the precept of the Torah, he was circumcised, and received the name of Saul (i.e. the desired), a name held in high honour in the tribe of Benjamin to which the first king of Israel had belonged.[13] He bore this name in the Hebrew world, but in the Greco-Roman world he was called Paul.[14] There is nothing strange about this double appellation, either as regards its origin or as regards its use. In fact we know from the papyri and the inscriptions that the Greek-speaking Jews habitually had two names, the first Hebrew and used in the bosom of the family, another, Greek or Latin, used in intercourse with pagan society.[15]

[11] Acts xxiii. 6.
[12] Phil. iii. 5; Acts xxvi. 5.
[13] Phil. iii. 5; Acts ix. 1; xiii. 1.
[14] "Saul, otherwise Paul," writes St. Luke in his account of the meeting of Paul and Barnabas with Sergius Paulus the proconsul of Cyprus. (Acts xiii. 9.)
[15] The Greek form Saulos, derived from the Hebrew Saul, might excite ridicule, for it called up the picture of a man who struts in his walk. On the other hand, the Latin word Paulus means: small in stature. If the rank of Roman citizen had been conferred some time before on an ancestor of St. Paul's by a member of the illustrious family of the Pauli, the adoption of this name would be explained as a mark of gratitude for the favour.

Saul's mother-tongue was Aramaic.[16] Of course, the Jews of Tarsus, like those of Alexandria, spoke Greek fluently. The case could not be otherwise in these ghettos of the Dispersion, where the Bible was read in the Greek translation of the Septuagint, still less in these Hellenized cities where business of any importance whatever demanded a thorough familiarity with Greek. But in many families it was made a point of honour to use only the national language in the home. Men prided themselves on speaking "Hebrew," for Aramaic had become a kind of official language of the children of Israel, and it was in "Hebrew" that St. Paul harangued his brethren of Jerusalem when they mobbed him.[17]

In his own house the authority of the father was undisputed and absolute. The Law imposed upon him the duty of bringing up his children strictly, with a firmness which inspired fear as well as respect. We may rest assured that the young Saul was brought up in accordance with this rule and this tradition.

As for his religious education, it was given according to the programme drawn up by the Elders: "At five, the reading of the Bible; at ten, the study of the Mishna;[18] at thirty, the keeping of

[16] For many centuries Aramaic had superseded Hebrew. In our Lord's time, only educated men, even at Jerusalem, were able to read the sacred books in the original. In the synagogues of Palestine itself it was necessary to translate the sacred text, sentence by sentence, into the vulgar tongue, i.e. Aramaic; this was the duty of the targumist.

[17] Acts xxi. 40; xxii. 2.

[18] The Mishna, or second Law, consisted of the sum of the traditions of the Ancients or Scribes. Its authority was not inferior to that of the Torah: "The words of the Ancients are more important than those of the

the commandments." Thus, from his infancy the mind of Saul was in contact with the Divine, and supported by it. The first reading which he heard and understood was that of the mercies and the promises of God to the Jewish people. The pages of the sacred text, explained and commented on in his presence, were the cause of his first emotions and the source of his first joys. He knew in its main lines the history of his nation, even before he grasped its full religious significance. His imagination and his memory became thus peopled with Biblical pictures and images at the same time as his mind and his heart became firmly attached to the God of the Jews, beside whom, as he was told, the pagan idols were only mud and empty names.

His father, as a good Pharisee, must certainly have refused to let him attend the Greek schools. Besides, in the ghetto itself, there were masters to teach the Jewish children. There was attached to every synagogue a school where scribes gave elementary instruction to their young co-religionists. There they learned to write, read, reckon, and above all, they acquired a practical knowledge of the Law. At school, as at home, the Bible was the only book, the starting-point and the goal of all learning. Profane authors were banished from Jewish education. The Tarsian professors of rhetoric, of literature, and of philosophy, played no direct part in the intellectual formation of St. Paul.

At the same time, as he grew up, the child could

prophets," we read in the Talmud, or again : " The words of the Scribes are worthier of esteem than those of the Law, for, among the words of the Law, some are important and some of small consequence, but the words of the Scribes are all important."

not entirely escape the influence of the Tarsian environment. Certain contacts were inevitable. The great city possessed circuses and theatres, temples and forums by which the schoolboy would pass when he wandered outside the quarter inhabited by his race. In the street he would meet pagan processions on the day of some great panegyris; he would see sights which must have made all the deeper impression on his young mind precisely because he had been taught to turn away with horror from them; in particular he would hear hardly any language but Greek. At an early age he learnt this language. For the Jews of the Dispersion, who used the Alexandrian translation in their religious meetings, it was the language of the Bible. One day it will be the language of his apostolate among the Gentiles. He picked it up gradually in an entirely empirical fashion, merely by use, and without studied effort. Nor is his Greek the classical and literary Greek of the schools. It is true that in his letters and discourses three quotations from pagan poets are to be found, one from Aratus,[19] one from Menander,[20] and the third from Epimenides,[21] but these are only proverbs or popular tags gathered in the market-place. It remains a fact, however, that the mere knowledge and use of Greek enriched Saul's mind with new concepts and ideas strange to Palestinian Jewish thought. Lastly, the similes which he makes use of in his correspondence or in his preaching are borrowed in great part from his childhood memories, recalling the races of the stadium, the contests of the arena, scenes in the agora, the equipment of the legionary, the energy of the trader, and the

[19] Acts xvii. 28. [20] 1 Cor. xv. 33. [21] Titus i. 12.

animation of the forum or the market. Thus the surrounding atmosphere penetrated even into the ghetto, but yet in too indirect a manner, and in too small a proportion, to stamp any deep imprint on the spirit of Saul. He was born a Jew, and a Jew he remained all his life; his Hellenism was only superficial.

His father initiated him at an early age into the trade which he followed himself. Although doubtless he was already dreaming of making a scribe, and even a rabbi, of his son, he was bound first of all to give him some manual calling. On this point the declarations of the Jewish doctors are precise: "It is incumbent on the father," says the Talmud, "to keep his son in order, to instruct him in the Law, and to teach him a trade. . . . Whoever does not teach his son a trade, teaches him to be a brigand. . . . He who uses the crown (the Law) as a tool (that is, to gain his living) passes away quickly." We know that Hillel and Akiba, two of the most famous rabbis of Jerusalem, were wood-cutters. Saul's father did not neglect his duty. Moreover, apprenticeship was easy in the case of a craft practised in the home. Thus, when the child had grown up, and was traversing the Greco-Roman world, he was able in the midst of the heaviest apostolic labours, to defray the cost of his food and lodging by the work of his own hands.[22]

"At fifteen," we read in the *Sayings of the Fathers*,[23] "the child must apply himself to the

[22] Acts xviii. 3; xx. 34; 1 Cor. iv. 12; 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8.

[23] V, 21. The Sayings of the Fathers constitute one treatise of the Mishna. It is a collection of the maxims of the Ancients. Its Hebrew title is *Pirqé Aboth*.

study of the Talmud." Saul had probably reached this age when his father decided to send him to Jerusalem.[24] This might be about the year 22 or 23. The plan was the result of long consideration. Its aim was to complete the religious education of the boy, and to make of him a man of learning, a scholar, a scribe. In this way his access would be assured to the highest and therefore most coveted offices in the Jewish community at Tarsus. It was the first step on the way to the honours dear to the soul of every Pharisee. In a few years, Saul would return from the holy city, his head crowned with the double aureole of orthodoxy and learning; in the ghetto he would be called Father and Teacher.

No doubt it was a long journey from Tarsus to Jerusalem, but that thought could not frighten a son of that Israelite race which for centuries had wandered round the Mediterranean, and whose life was a continual movement. And besides, the future student would travel with friends of his parents or with companions who would provide him with society, and if necessary with protection. Large caravans of pilgrims and merchants followed one another at frequent intervals along the high road which skirted the coast of Syria and Phœnicia; all that was necessary was to join one of them, unless a traveller preferred to embark on a vessel sailing for Cæsarea, from which Jerusalem could easily be reached in two stages.

Saul left the paternal roof, bearing in the depth of his heart a double love: first, love of his nation, whose history he admired and whose present humiliation was in his eyes a pledge of its coming resurrection; next, love of his native city, to which

[24] Cf. Acts xxvi. 4.

he belonged as a citizen, and whose name was illustrious on account of the learning and energy of its inhabitants. He was proud of being a Jew and proud of being a Tarsian. Further, he knew that his rank of Roman citizen was a safeguard and a power, for thereby he was one of an aristocracy, whose members had a right to special respect from one end of the empire to the other; he already admired the organization, and guessed the power of that formidable machine which the Roman administration then was.

He set out full of high hopes.

CHAPTER II

THE SCRIBE AND THE PHARISEE

I. In the Shadow of the Temple

Brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the truth of the law of the fathers. (Acts xxii. 3.)

The Holy City was the spiritual home of every believing Jew. Saul's emotion must have been profound when he saw in the distance the walls of Jerusalem, and still more profound when he entered the Temple precincts for the first time. The dream which each one of his brethren of the Dispersion cherished in the depth of his heart, was realized for him. He found himself at the centre of the national life, he saw the house of God. There he was going to live for the present, in close contact with the glorious past; there he would begin the study of sacred learning under the guidance of illustrious teachers.

These teachers attracted thousands of students from all parts of the world. This body of young men, as enthusiastic and noisy as in the contemporary schools of Alexandria, or of Athens, or in the mediæval universities of Bologna, Paris, or Salamanca, yet possessed at certain moments, something of that gravity which was always one of the characteristics of the Jewish race. As in all other places, the pupils crowded to hear the doctors who were most in vogue.

The work of teaching was carried on in every corner of the ancient city. In the vicinity of the Temple and the principal synagogues there were no doubt rooms set apart for this purpose, but very often the masters lectured in the open air, in the porticoes and the courts of the Temple, at cross-roads and in public squares. The students formed a ring round the speaker, and, tightly packed together, squatted on the ground at his feet, listening attentively to his words.

They had only one book, the Bible. Neither profane history, nor geography, nor mathematics, was taught: the future scribe had no use for these trivial pursuits which delighted the pagans; he was only interested in questions of dogma or morals, of sacred history or of religious law. Hence all instruction was concentrated round the Law and Tradition. Side by side with the written code, whose authority was not disputed, there was the oral code, whose influence grew from day to day. Moreover, the Tradition supplemented the Law, of which it was really only the development and extension. The master endeavoured to draw proofs and arguments from the Scripture in order to support his teaching and justify his conclusions. There was no preoccupation with the literal interpretation of the sacred text; the sole object was its utilization, a fact which in the event gave rise to an exegesis which was extravagant, over-subtilized, and devoid of scientific value. This rabbinical exegesis, so highly esteemed in the schools, had to conform to minute regulations, many of which are quite puerile.[1] When the Bible

[1] According to one of these rules, a word in the Biblical text could be replaced by another, always on the con-

remained silent on the subject of recently-developed problems, Tradition was resorted to and the solution was placed under the shelter of venerated names. The lecture adopted now the tone of a homily, now the style of a juridical argument.

The pupils listened without taking notes, relying on their memory alone. If they were questioned they aimed at repeating carefully word for word what the master had said, without making any change either in its form or content. "Everyone is under obligation," we read in the Talmud, "to teach in the very same terms which his master used." Of the pupil who attained to this perfection, it was said by way of commendation: "He is like a cemented cistern which does not let a single drop of its water percolate out."

At the time when Saul arrived at Jerusalem, there were two outstanding names in the series of bygone doctors, that of Hillel and that of Shammai. These two famous rabbis had taught in the time of Herod the Great, and although they both belonged to the Pharisaic sect, divergent tendencies had made them the heads of two rival schools. Their differences only referred to quite secondary matters; we should not hesitate to call them trifles or ridiculous niceties.[2]

dition that the second had the same numerical value as the first. As figures were represented by letters of the alphabet, the equivalence could be easily verified, and at need the substitution was readily made.

[2] The following example, preserved in the Mishna, is typical of these disagreements between Shammai and Hillel. It refers to the posture suitable for the recitation of the Shema, a prayer which every Jew must recite twice a day. Shammai said: "At night thou shalt pray prostrate on the ground, and in the morning, standing, for it is written in Deuteronomy (iv. 7): "at thy lying down and thy rising up." Hillel said: "Pray in the one position or the other, according to convenience."

Shammai showed himself habitually a rigorist in the application of principles; Hillel naturally inclined to more liberal solutions. Disputes of course succeeded one another, were drawn out and became embittered. That was enough to create Hillelists and Shammaists. Otherwise both sides remained faithful to the pure Pharisaic teaching, which exercised a preponderant influence in the schools as in the synagogues, for it was professed by the vast majority of the Scribes.

Saul did not have to make a choice between the Pharisaic and Sadducean masters.[3] Thanks to the training he had received in his father's house, he took his way to the former. Among them, Rabban Gamaliel[4] had the reputation of being the profoundest scholar in Jerusalem. He represented the family and the tradition of Hillel, to whom he was directly related both by blood and by ideas. He was a man, it was said, of an open and liberal mind, one whom his connection with high society had taught a certain degree of tolerance. He did not curse persons who studied Greek; he did not turn away his head when he passed even a pagan woman in the street; he returned the salutation which he received from a Gentile. In spite of this, nobody questioned his absolute orthodoxy, and his prestige was so great that he was able to speak on behalf of the Apostles summoned before the Sanhedrin, without his authority being diminished or his

[3] The Sadducees at this period exercised but a very meagre influence on the intellectual education of students in Jerusalem.

[4] Gamaliel I, or the Elder, the contemporary of Jesus and of St. Paul, must not be confused with his grandson of the same name, Gamaliel II, who played an important part in Jewish history during the years A.D. 80 to 110.

memory suffering in consequence.[5] Before him, teachers of the Law bore the title of Rab (master), or Rabbi (my master); but his co-religionists, in order to show the high respect in which they held him, inaugurated in his favour the still more honourable appellation of Rabban (our master). Loved and respected during his lifetime as a wise and upright man,[6] he was mourned and venerated as a saint after his death. The Mishna records his praise in these terms: "Since Gamaliel died, there is no longer any respect for the law; purity and piety died with him." His was a just and profoundly religious soul. He obeyed his conscience in pleading for the acquittal of the Apostles, whom he considered innocent, and not less so in associating himself with the condemnation of Stephen, whom he regarded as a blasphemer.

We cannot doubt that such a master exercised a very real influence on the mind of Saul, who, from the time of his arrival in Jerusalem, had attached himself to the person of the celebrated doctor. "I was brought up in this city," he said on a later occasion, "and taught at the feet of Gamaliel."[7] It is a direct testimony.

The young student, who lived no doubt at his sister's house, at any rate if she had already settled in the holy city,[8] applied himself with all his might to the work of finishing his intellectual and religious education. Apart from some hours taken up by manual work—for he had to earn his living—he devoted all his time to study and to meditation. The mental qualities of which he afterwards gave proof, were already revealing themselves and assert-

[5] Acts v. 34-40.
[6] Acts v. 34.
[7] Acts xxii. 3.
[8] Acts xxiii. 16.

ing themselves more and more. The penetration of his intelligence, the force of his dialectic, and the strength and solidity of his thought could not escape the notice either of his master Gamaliel or of those who listened to him in the course of those long debates in which the pupils gave a demonstration of their knowledge and made a trial of their skill in the presence of their professor. Rabban Gamaliel must have built very high hopes on this Tarsian pupil of his, who distinguished himself so much by his learning, his devotion to the Law and his impetuous temperament.

Among the students who were regularly to be found at the feet of the illustrious doctor, there were some to whom Saul became bound by ties of friendship, because he perceived in them a spirit akin to his own. Unfortunately, our authorities are silent on this side of St. Paul's private life. Was he acquainted at this period with Stephen, Barnabas, Philip, Silas, and others among those Hellenist Jews who afterwards like him embraced the Christian faith, and several of whom were to be his companions in his apostolate? It is a pity that we can find no answer to this question either in the Epistles or in the Acts.

When Saul had completed his rabbinical education, he had to bid farewell to his masters, beginning with Gamaliel, in order to return to his native city. We do not know the length of his stay at Jerusalem. In any case, it seems likely that he had already left it when Jesus came there to preach the gospel of the kingdom, in 28-29.[9] If

[9] For the public ministry of Jesus and his Passion, the following dates seem to rest on solid probability: beginning of the Galilean ministry, January or February, 28; death of our Saviour, 7th April, 30.

Saul had actually seen and heard the Galilean rabbi, he would not have remained a careless auditor; his fiery spirit would at once have taken sides for or against him, and in one or other of his letters he would have alluded to a fact of such importance. Similarly, if St. Paul knew Christ before his passion and resurrection, how are we to explain the fact that he represents the vision on the road to Damascus as his first meeting with the Master, and that he never once accuses himself of having turned his back on the Saviour's presence.[10]

Saul returned to Tarsus with the prestige of learning acquired under the most illustrious masters. His prolonged intercourse with the doctors of the Holy City had indeed given him a good grounding in exegesis and had trained him in the practice of disputation; a considerable advantage, which must have been of great assistance to him, as his letters show. On the other hand his hatred of paganism had increased in the same proportion as his devotion to the Law and Tradition had developed. Further, being better acquainted with the history of his nation, he felt a stronger love for that chosen race to which he belonged. Henceforth he will ever have before his mind's eye a vivid picture of that holy Temple in which he has prayed to the God of his fathers and whose splendour has delighted him on the days of great festivals. Finally, he knew by personal experience that the source of happiness and the principle of all joy lay in the fulfilment of the precepts of the Law. He was a Pharisee, a convinced Pharisee, with dreams of proselytism.[11]

[10] Against this the words of 2 Cor. v. 16 (" if we have known Christ according to the flesh ") cannot be urged, for they contain only an unreal condition.

[11] Gal. i. 14.

II. At Tarsus

According to the most sure sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. (Acts xxvi. 5.)

Saul would be from eighteen to twenty years of age when he returned to Tarsus and resumed his place among his family. We cannot doubt that the young scribe was received there with emotion and pride. It must have been especially a great joy to his father to see again this son of his with all his ardour and enthusiasm, his language and opinions penetrated with the most genuine Pharisaism: he saw in him the comfort and glory of his old age. The Elders of the ghetto received with satisfaction and kindness the greeting of this young man who had come directly from holy Sion, who had sat at the feet of the most famous doctors there, and who brought back in the folds of his dress a breath of the fragrance of the incense burned in the Temple of the Most High.

After his return, Saul again took up work in his father's workshop, where cloaks and tents were made out of the rough material woven at Tarsus. At the same time, manual work could not be the principal occupation of his life: a pupil of Gamaliel had incurred obligations towards religious learning properly so-called; he was bound to continue the study of it, and to devote himself to it for some hours every day, with all the power of his mind. The precepts of the Elders were explicit on this point: "He who is much occupied in trade cannot attain to wisdom," Hillel had said. "Make the study of the Law the rule of thy life," Shammai had

advised.[12] In the eyes of every scribe convinced of the dignity of his office, an ever-deepening knowledge of the Torah was the highest aim of human activity and the summit of moral perfection. Apart from this everything else was a despicable or dangerous futility, seeing that the one thing essential was sacred science, the knowledge of the Book united to knowledge of Tradition.

With this spiritual outlook Saul lived for several years, firmly attached to the ideal of the Scribe and Pharisee which represented for him the loftiest and purest type of religious life. Doubtless he did not despise the craft which constituted his means of livelihood, but he allotted to physical work only the time strictly necessary, reserving long hours for meditation and study. Such was indeed the mode of life which his masters at Jerusalem had led before him, including Rabban Gamaliel, whose memory lived in his thoughts, and whom he naturally followed as his model.

Like a convinced and zealous Pharisee, Saul devoted himself to the minute observance of the mass of precepts which regulated every action of life, whether material or moral, intellectual or religious. Faithful to the rules referring to legal purity, he was equally careful of those which concerned fasting, almsgiving, the Sabbath, and prayer. All these rules, which enveloped his life like a fine-meshed net, were in his eyes a perpetual homage paid to God; their almost infinite number could not terrify his profoundly believing soul, since by their means opportunities were multiplied of serving the Most

[12] Cf. *Sayings of the Fathers*, I, 15; II, 5. See also a remark of Rabbi Méir's (*ibid.*, IV, 10) and the passage of Ecclesiasticus on the wise men (xxxviii. 24—xxxix. 11).

High, and of being pleasing to him. In Saul's case, external formalism did not involve any danger to true spiritual life, for a serious concern with moral perfection dominated and animated all his religious activity. He had too lofty a sense of things Divine, and too deep a feeling of his union with God, for the observance of the letter ever to become with him the mechanical execution of an external rule. He had no resemblance to those "dyed" Pharisees of which the Talmud speaks,[13] for the motive of his actions was the love of God.

Side by side with this love which inspired his thoughts and animated his actions, Saul bore in himself a source of suffering. The touching picture, which he afterwards gave, of the interior conflict which is presented in the soul drawn upwards by the law of God and dragged downwards by the desires of the flesh,[14] would seem to have been suggested by personal experience, prior to his conversion. One of the characteristic and constant traits of his moral constitution was his passion for perfection. He was not a man to serve God by halves, or to be satisfied with a compromise. Endowed with such a nature, how could he have helped feeling keenly the inadequacy of the means which a creature has at its disposal in order to attain to the sovereign good? He knew that crucifixion undergone by the soul which agonizes and gasps in its pursuit of the ideal and in its struggles to rise to what is higher. He was more acutely conscious than other men of his misery in the moral sphere, in prospect of the supreme sanctity for which he thirsted, but which towered far away before his eyes, out of his reach, as

[13] Babylon Yalmud, Sotah, 22, b.
[14] Epistle to the Romans, especially chapter vii.

if placed upon an inaccessible peak. We must recognize a sign of high religious worth, and a token of spiritual elevation in this natural fear caused in a soul by the thought of the ever-present possibility of offending, and in this continuous anguish at the sight of the ideal never attained. Therefore, at the same time that the fulfilment of the commandments was a wholesome and ever-renewed joy to Saul, he felt in the depth of his being a restlessness and a pain. Assuredly this interior smart only served to increase his eagerness in the service of God, and to strengthen his devotion to the Law; instead of slipping into despondency, he received a new impetus to action, as if opposition and contradiction could only succeed in rousing his energy. Besides, the young scribe was too strongly attached to the faith of his fathers and too deeply persuaded of the supreme importance of the Law, to be able to catch a glimpse or conceive a notion, of any other ideal; what is more, the slightest doubt on this point would have horrified him like the worst blasphemy.

To this work of self-perfection, Saul joined an apostolate in word. In his character of scribe, he had a part to play in relation to his brethren. With his impetuous and ardent nature, he must have thrown all his heart into the task which devolved upon him. To suppose the contrary would be to fly in the face of all probability, for all his life long he was a man of untiring activity. He himself testifies that he led the life of a zealous Pharisee during the years which preceded his conversion.[15] The ghetto at Tarsus gave him an excellent field of action. At the synagogue, where he went to take part in religious services, and where his status of

[15] Acts xxii. 3; xxvi. 5; Gal. i. 13, 14; Phil. iii. 6.

scribe secured him a seat of honour beside the Elders, Saul spoke at the invitation of the president, and edified the assembly with the "word of consolation." Following the custom that prevailed among all the Jewish communities, he sometimes gave a commentary on the sacred text in the homiletical form, sometimes set forth traditions and showed their application, endeavouring in either case to reproduce faithfully the teaching which he had himself received at Jerusalem.

In the school attended by the children of the ghetto, he performed the same functions of preacher, jurist, and exegete, with the difference that in the presence of this second audience, he aimed more at instruction than at edification.

He was not, perhaps, a member of the local Sanhedrin, that is, of the council which directed the administration of the community, but at least he was present at its meetings, as he had a right to be, and in difficult questions he might be consulted as an expert. His knowledge and piety must have quickly gained for him both respect and influence among the Jewish community at Tarsus, more especially as his whole character, so averse to compromise, would inevitably have led him to speak with decision in all circumstances, and to take a firm line in all disputes and controversies.

His enthusiasm for the Law and Tradition doubtless seemed excessive or unseasonable to those of his countrymen who had become a little coloured by the Hellenism which surrounded them. The rigid Pharisaism of Saul permitted no accommodation, we may be sure, with pagan ideas, in which he saw a principle fatal to the religion of his fathers, and to the Jewish nation itself. His abhorrence of super-

stitious and idolatrous cults and of immoral practices had only increased during his residence in the Holy City; so had his contempt for the rhetoricians who boasted that they could teach the rules of eloquence, and for the philosophers who made a profession of wisdom in the midst of intrigues and cabals. The proximity of the paganism which flaunted itself under a thousand forms in the streets and squares of the great city now caused him constant suffering. And even if he rejoiced to see proselytes attend the synagogue, and took a pleasure in introducing them to the knowledge of the Mosaic Law, it was his special care to protect and develop the faith of his brethren, in whom he honoured the natural heirs of the Divine promises. A traditionalist by education and by conviction, he was the champion of the Jewish tradition.

By a curious contrast, this fiery soul inhabited a body of mean appearance. Tradition is unanimous on this point, and its testimony is in perfect agreement with the ancient delineations of the Apostle, some of which go back to the fourth century. Short in stature, and timid in manner, Saul was far from impressing a beholder by his exterior. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, composed about 160-170, and probably in Asia Minor, have preserved for us the following portrait: "A man of small stature, bald-headed, bow-legged, strong, with joined eyebrows, and slightly aquiline nose, full of grace."[16] St. John Chrysostom called Paul "a man three cubits high." Indeed, he himself was fond of joking, both charmingly and wittily, about his ungraceful and

[16] Cf. Leon Vouaux, *Les Actes de Paul*, p. 151, Paris, 1913.

unimpressive appearance.[17] We cannot tell whether he was afflicted from his youth with that painful and humiliating malady, to which he twice refers in his letters,[18] and which he compares to a thorn or splinter lodged in his flesh, and at the nature of which we can only guess.[19] With all his physical disadvantages, however, this man exercised an extraordinary attraction. Everyone who came in contact with Paul felt his influence. No man could remain indifferent in the presence of this strange figure, because there resided in it all the grandeur and nobility of a great soul.

Did Saul marry during these years which he spent in his native city? We should be inclined to think so, if we considered only the customs that prevailed in the Jewish world. In the first place, the children of Israel did, in fact, marry at an early age: "At the age of eighteen, marriage," was the counsel of the Ancients when they drew up the ideal scheme of life;[20] and again the state of bachelordom was frequently the subject of ridicule, and indeed even of contempt, in a society in which paternity was regarded as a duty and an honour. Nevertheless, it is almost certain that the Apostle lived a celibate life even before his conversion. In this particular the testimony of Catholic tradition is very definite. Only one dissenting voice can be found, that of Clement of Alexandria, according to whom Paul was married

[17] 1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. x. 1, 10, 12-14.

[18] Gal. iv. 13, 14; 2 Cor. xii. 7-9.

[19] The texts give the impression of a physical infirmity, as painful for the sufferer as it was trying for his companions, of an acute and chronic character. Among the numerous theories put forward, that of malaria seems the most probable.

[20] *Sayings of the Fathers*, V, 21.

but did not take his wife with him on his travels in order not to be impeded in his ministry.[21] In any case, if Saul did enter into the married state at the age at which it was an Israelite's duty to found a family—a very improbable supposition—it was not long before he was a widower, and after that he remained single. He himself has expressed his opinion in very clear terms on the subject of his celibate condition in the First Epistle to the Corinthians: "I would that all men were even as myself (i.e., resolved to continence); but every one hath his proper gift from God; one after this manner, and another after that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they so continue, even as I (i.e., free from the ties of marriage)." [22] He considers it then a grace from above to be unmarried, which agrees with his teaching to the faithful at Corinth about the superiority of continence and virginity to the married state.[23] From which it seems very likely that celibacy was Paul's condition all through his life.

III. The Persecutor of the Nazarenes

Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it. (Gal. i. 13.)

While Saul, still feeling in his heart a homesickness for Jerusalem, was working hard in the ghetto at Tarsus in his efforts to quicken the religious life of his countrymen, and making it his

[21] This opinion of Clement's is given by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 30.

[22] 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8.

[23] See chapter vii of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

business to advance the principles of strict Pharisaic orthodoxy, a new situation arose in Palestine. In the year 27 or 28 a young Galilean who till then had lived in retirement, entirely unnoticed by his contemporaries, had suddenly begun to preach the near approach of the kingdom of God. His name was Jesus, of Nazareth. He travelled over the Galilean countryside from one small town to another, announcing to everybody the news of the kingdom. Although no master had had the charge of his education, he spoke with astonishing authority, and the hearers were thrilled by the talent of the new rabbi as well as by the beauty of his teaching.

The miracles of all kinds which abounded along his path gave him the prestige of a wonder-worker. Very rapidly the number of his disciples had increased. The Galilean crowds, quivering with emotion, and carried away by their enthusiasm, had several times saluted in him the Messias promised to Israel; but he himself had always shunned these excited acclamations. At Jerusalem itself, where he had gone on various occasions, and where he had sometimes remained a fairly long time, his teaching had gained him some warm sympathizers. Many upright and sincere souls had given their adherence to his doctrine, and waited impatiently for him to reveal himself openly as Messias. Meanwhile the Pharisees, apprehensive of this movement which was steadily gaining ground, and jealous of the success of the young Nazarene preacher, had lost no time in placing themselves in opposition to him. After some covert attacks, they had proceeded openly against him, in the name of the Law of Moses, and of the traditions, which they conceived

to be in danger. In the year 30, at the time of the Pasch, with the support of the Sadducees, who were alarmed to think what consequences the new doctrine might have for the national religion and the public Temple worship, they had succeeded in seizing his person. Before the Sanhedrin, where he appeared as a prisoner, Jesus had publicly asserted his Messianic character, and had claimed the title of Son of God. To punish such a blasphemy, the religious rulers of Israel had passed a sentence of death, which the Roman authority, represented by the procurator Pilate, had ratified and executed. Condemned to the ignominious penalty of the gibbet, the Galilean rabbi had been crucified.

Immediately after these events, his disciples had gathered together again, and since that time they had lived in the Holy City, organized as a community and known by the name of Nazarenes. During the first years that followed their Master's death, there was nothing to distinguish them outwardly from other devout Israelites. Strongly attached to Judaism, they assiduously visited the Temple, took part in the sacrifices, practised the purifications required by the Law, and scrupulously observed the distinction between pure and impure food. It is true they met together for the common meals which they took in private houses, and on these occasions they repeated the Eucharistic supper, the celebration of which thus escaped the public eye, but nothing in their attitude indicated a schismatic tendency; moreover they enjoyed the respect and favour of the populace.[24] The Christian community at Jerusalem might have been taken for a Jewish sect, so close was its union with the synagogue. However, this

[24] Acts ii. 43-47.

attitude of reserve—so indispensable at the beginning, as otherwise the infant Church would have been smothered in its cradle—was bound to come to an end. More and more recruits came to swell the number of the Nazarenes, and the disciples grew progressively bolder.

Some from among them began to preach in public, and to engage in frank discussions with their former co-religionists. But these first attempts at propaganda were soon stopped, for they had succeeded in awakening the apprehension and hostility of the chief priests. The Sadducees had two of the Apostles, Peter and John, arrested and imprisoned after they had preached the resurrection of the dead in the person of Jesus; soon afterwards, however, they released them, thinking that their threats would make them more prudent and discreet.[25] Greater excitement was caused, some time later, by the general imprisonment of the leaders of the Christian community, and it required all the authority of Gamaliel to prevent the matter ending in tragedy; as it was, thirty-nine strokes of the rod were added this time to the strict warning given to the Apostles.[26] It seems, however, that it would have been difficult to accomplish the execution of the accused, for the jealous eye of the procurator Pilate watched over the maintenance of order in the city of Jerusalem, and his iron hand repressed sharply the slightest popular movement, as derogatory to the sovereignty of Rome.

Saul returned to Palestine before the end of this period of comparative peace for the followers of Jesus. We do not know the motive that brought

[25] Acts iv. 1-21. [26] Acts v. 17-40.

him back to the Holy City. Perhaps he simply followed a wish to live within reach of the Temple, and in touch with the teachers of his youth: Jerusalem had long been the true home of his heart. He must have been glad to return to the society of Gamaliel and of the other doctors whom he had known. But now he had no idea of being a mere learner; he felt drawn to action and his eager spirit of proselytism longed to translate itself into deeds. Moreover it was not long before an opportunity was given to him of proving his zeal in the cause of the Law.

Among the faithful followers of Jesus of Nazareth, there were included not only Jews of Galilee, and of Judæa, but also some Greek-speaking Jews of the Dispersion. One of these last, named Stephen, attracted attention by his boldness and skill.[27] As the result of a disagreement which arose within the community between the Hebrew and Hellenized members, in reference to the distribution of shares in the common meal, he had been appointed one of a committee of seven members, who were to be responsible for the service of the meals. But this material occupation was not sufficient to absorb all his energy, and the young deacon at the same time devoted himself to preaching. Remarkably gifted with eloquence, he revived the idea of extending the bounds of apostolic work by proclaiming the name of Jesus without reserve, and took the first step towards exciting public discussions in orthodox circles, by expounding the Gospel teaching at meetings in the synagogues. He went on, says the author of the Acts, to confront his opponents on their own ground, in the midst of their religious

[27] For St. Stephen, see chapters vi and vii of Acts.

assemblies. This was a great innovation, for up to that time, apart from some attempts quickly repressed, the propagation of the Christian faith had been carried on almost entirely by meetings between individuals. Such an innovation could not fail to provoke conflicts with the Jewish authorities, and in the struggle which followed, Stephen would inevitably occupy a conspicuous place, seeing that he was himself the leader of the offensive.

It seems likely that in these disputes with the Scribes in the synagogues of Jerusalem, he attacked especially the narrow and material formalism of Pharisaic piety, denouncing sternly those who had opposed the preaching of Jesus, showing that they were the true sons of their fathers who had never ceased to persecute the prophets, and calling on them to repent, by which means alone they could escape the just anger of God. Naturally the Pharisees were roused to fury by these blows, and were impatient to put an end to such insolence and such blasphemy.

We are tempted to think that in some of these fierce oratorical battles Stephen had the opportunity of trying his strength against Saul. The latter was surely at Jerusalem during the weeks which preceded the killing of the Hellenist deacon, and with his passionate temperament he would have been impelled to throw himself heart and soul into the fight. The hypothesis is the more probable because among the synagogues named as having served as the scenes of these stormy controversies, that of the Jews of Cilicia, to which the scribe of Tarsus would naturally have been attracted, is expressly named. Perhaps it was from the lips of Stephen himself that he first heard of Jesus of Nazareth. However the truth may

lie with regard to this point, the name of Jesus occurred too often in controversies, and awakened in the hearers feelings too divided, for us to suppose that Saul had not received some account of him who had borne it. Thus in his inquiries into the grounds of the complaints formulated against the new sect, he acquired at least a general idea of the history of its founder and of the doctrine which he had taught. Further, his whole being must have trembled with indignation on hearing of certain actions and certain declarations of this same Jesus, whom he, like a true Pharisee, regarded as an impostor and a blasphemer; similarly he could only condemn, as traitors to the Law and rebels against the national authorities, those Jews who had embraced the Christian faith.

In the spring of 36, a year before the death of Tiberius, Pilate was removed from his office of procurator on the complaint of the leading men of the province of Judæa. Vitellius, who was then legate of Syria, despatched him to Rome, his hands still red with the blood of the Samaritans massacred by his order on Mount Gerizim, and chose as his provisional successor an administrator named Marullus. The interim period was prolonged to over a year, for Pilate's successor was only appointed after the accession of Caligula (18th March, 37). Everything points to the conclusion that the martyrdom of Stephen happened a short time after Pilate's disgrace, before the intermediate governor had a firm grasp of Palestinian affairs, and while therefore the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem felt sufficiently independent to order the execution of a capital sentence without risking an intervention of the Roman authority.

Stephen's attitude and his attacks had excited the irrepressible rage of his opponents. Refusing to own themselves beaten by his arguments, and despairing of refuting them—so great was the young deacon's eloquence—they resolved to suppress him by force. By getting rid of him they would avenge the Law which he insulted and violated. In the course of a public debate, there arose a movement which degenerated into a riot. Stephen's enemies threw themselves upon him, seized him, and dragged him before the supreme tribunal. There, witnesses testified to having heard him utter blasphemous statements against the Temple and the Law. When called upon to rebut these charges, the prisoner re-affirmed his previous statements in a speech which is not so much a plea in his own defence as an arraignment of his judges and of all Israel; without any reserve at all, he condemned Judaism in the most downright fashion. The infuriated auditors, gnashing their teeth, and stopping their ears to signify their horror, did not even wait till the sentence was pronounced by the Sanhedrin. Stephen was thrust out in order to be put to death without delay. The rush of the mob carried him to the city gate, and his accusers, in accordance with the ancient custom, proceeded to the execution.

While they were stoning him, a young scribe guarded their garments, which had been deposited at his feet: it was Saul of Tarsus, who, being unable to take a more active part, associated himself whole-heartedly with the act of vengeance, approved of the penalty, and execrated the subject of it. He must afterwards have reproached himself bitterly for thus having taken part, even if only indirectly,

in the execution of Stephen.[28] But for the moment, he only rejoiced in the victory of the faith of the Pharisees over the imposture of the Galilean.

As often happens in the case of men of profound convictions and impetuous character, Saul's zeal developed into fanaticism. It is a psychological phenomenon frequently exemplified and easily explained. The martyrdom of Stephen gave a taste for Christian blood to this scribe who thenceforward became a fierce persecutor. The execution of the Hellenist deacon was followed by energetic repressive measures against those who had listened to the Christian propaganda. The Nazarenes were hunted out as traitors to the Law, and a considerable number of them had to leave Jerusalem.[29] While some of them were scattered over the districts of Judæa and Samaria, others directed their course either to the places of their origin or to countries where they had connexions. In this way Christian communities were formed at several points outside the borders of Palestine. It was not long before the leaders of the Sanhedrin were informed of this fact by the reports which came from the ghettos of Syria, especially from Antioch and Damascus, and they immediately sought for a means of checking this expansion of Christianity.

Meanwhile, in the Holy City Saul was making himself conspicuous by his religious zeal, and showing himself a ruthless foe to the disciples of Jesus. Breathing only threatenings and slaughter, and going from house to house and from synagogue to synagogue, he hunted the Nazarenes, caused some to be imprisoned, others scourged, and com-

[28] Acts xxii. 20.
[29] Acts viii. 1.

pelled the timid ones to deny the name of Christ.[30] According to his own expression, he wasted the Church of God. In his fervour, he imagined himself called to discharge the same police functions in distant places, when he heard that groups of Christians had gathered in Syria. With this idea, he went to the high priest, who was Caiaphas or Jonathas,[31] and asked to be entrusted with a formal mission. He undertook to go to Damascus, to arrest the adherents of the detested superstition, and to bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem, in order to deliver them up to the judgment of the Sanhedrin. For this purpose he would need a letter to the brethren there in order that they might give him their assistance in this delicate operation.[32] The high priest received Saul's proposal with the warmest favour, gave him full authority to act, handed him the desired letter for the Jews of Damascus, ordered an escort for him, and assured him that the Divine blessing would be granted to a project whose success would secure no less glory than advantage to the religion of his fathers.[33]

[30] Acts viii. 3; xxii. 4; xxvi. 10, 11; Gal. i, 13; 1 Tim. i. 13.

[31] It was in 36 that Caiaphas lost the office of high priest, some months after Pilate's dismissal. His immediate successors were Jonathas, in this same year 36, and Theophilus in 37.

[32] We know from the Jewish historian Josephus (*The Jewish War*, II, 20, 2; VII, 8, 7) that the Jewish community at Damascus was very prosperous at this time.

[33] Acts ix. 1, 2. The high priest at Jerusalem did not, in theory, possess any direct authority over the local Sanhedrins outside Judæa, nor had he any right to send emissaries outside Jewish territory to arrest suspected Jews, a thing which the Roman authority would not have tolerated in normal times. But a moment had come when presumption was safe, for since Pilate's departure there

As the account in Acts gives the impression that Paul's conversion is closely connected with Stephen's martyrdom in point of time, we may suppose that Saul started for Damascus in the course of the summer of 36. He had committed himself entirely to the struggle against Jesus of Nazareth, and he left Jerusalem completely happy, feeling that he was performing a noble work, a sacred duty, and fully determined to overcome all the difficulties which might arise in his path.

was only an administrator at Cæsarea, and Vitellius the legate of Syria, who was responsible for the government of Palestine, had always shown himself friendly and even indulgent to the Jews. Moreover, Saul's mission was an extraordinary and temporary one: the expedition could be brought to a successful conclusion within a month.

CHAPTER III

ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

. . . I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii. 12.)

Saul had left Jerusalem by the Gate of Benjamin, known also by the name of the Fish-gate, which opened towards the north, and at which the road to Samaria, Galilee, and Syria terminated. He set out, accompanied by a band of armed men, paid servants of the Sanhedrin, of the same category as those who had come to arrest Jesus. The little party travelled on foot. It was a long road from the Holy City to Damascus: it was reckoned at about a hundred and thirty miles. As the average day's journey of a pedestrian was twenty miles or so, six or seven stages had to be prepared for, their length varying according to the distances between the resting-places where the nights were passed.

Saul and his companions reached Samaria, descended to Scythopolis, crossed the Jordan a little below the Lake of Tiberias, and entered upon the high plateau of Hauran. It was the most frequented road from Jerusalem to Damascus; there one met caravans of Greek and Syrian merchants, nomads on their march, wandering artisans, officials on business, public couriers, pilgrims of every rank and of every variety of religion. In ancient times there was much more travelling than is generally

supposed, especially in those old eastern countries where the population has always possessed something of the instability of the desert sands.

On the seventh or eighth day of the journey—they must have rested on the Sabbath—Saul found himself in the great plain of Damascus, whose walls, rising out of the surrounding gardens, were outlined against the white background of the chalk cliffs which command the city on the north. He was just going to enter on the oasis, with its running water, and its pleasant shades, which stretches like a rich carpet of verdure on three sides of the city. "Paul had . . . behind him the majestic dome of Hermon, with the snow-filled furrows which make it look like an old man's head; on his right hand, Hauran, the two little mountain-chains which bound the lower course of the Pharphar, and the tumuli of the lake region; on his left the last buttresses of the Anti-Libanus, stretching out to connect it with Hermon. The impression given by this richly cultivated country, by these beautiful orchards, separated from one another by water-channels, and loaded with the finest fruit, is one of peace and happiness. . . . On emerging from the parched and rugged lands of Gaulonitis and Iturea, the feeling which absorbs the mind is that of joy to rediscover the works of man and the kindnesses of the heavens. From the remotest antiquity down to our own times, the belt of land which surrounds Damascus with freshness and well-being has borne but one name, has suggested but one thought, that of the paradise of God." [1] It was at this moment, and in this setting, that the mysterious event occurred, which has had

[1] Renan, *Les Apôtres*, 22e ed., pp. 177-78.

such vast consequences for the expansion of Christianity and for the faith of the world.

The Acts of the Apostles has preserved for us three distinct accounts, of which one is directly by St. Luke,[2] and the two others appear in speeches in which Paul relates the origin of his call to the Apostleship, first before the Jews of Jerusalem, and then before King Agrippa.[3]

It was noon, the hour at which the sun emits its most dazzling and most burning rays, when suddenly Saul and his attendants were surrounded by a blinding light. The leader of the little party fell on his face to the earth, and so did several of his companions; the rest remained standing, as if paralysed with amazement. At the same moment a voice was heard, but Paul alone could distinguish the words pronounced, and understand their meaning; in the same way, he alone could discern clearly the visible presence of him who spoke to him. The voice said in the Hebrew tongue: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad." "Who art thou, Lord?" asked Saul. The voice replied: "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." Saul answered: "What shall I do, Lord?" The voice said again: "Arise and go to Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things that thou must do." Then, after the voice was silent and the light had gone, Saul rose from the ground.

His companions also came to themselves and rushed to his side. But their leader stretched out his arms in front of him and groped with his hands, like a blind man: his eyes could no longer see any-

[2] Acts viii. 1-22.
[3] Acts xxii. 1-21; xxvi. 9-20.

thing. They thereupon led him step by step like a child, and brought him to Damascus.

When they entered the city, they made inquiries about the exact spot where dwelt Judas, the Jew with whom they were to stay, and to whom Saul had no doubt received a letter of introduction. This Judas occupied a house in the Straight Street, the principal thoroughfare of the city, which it traversed from end to end. After arriving at his host's house, Saul remained in a dazed condition for three entire days, a prey to remorse and anguish, and unable to take any food. During this time, the head of the Christian community at Damascus, whose name was Ananias, was miraculously informed of what had happened to Saul, and received from above an order to visit him with a threefold commission: he was to cure him of his blindness, to administer to him the baptism of water and of the Spirit, and to inform him of God's purpose for him. Ananias came therefore to Judas's house, and scrupulously discharged the task imposed on him. From that moment Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of the Nazarenes, was a disciple of Jesus.

Owing to the importance of the event, the three parallel narratives in the Acts have been thoroughly sifted by criticism.[4] Divergences relating to four or five points have been noted in them. According to Acts ix. 7 Saul's companions heard the sound of the voice, whereas, according to xxii. 9, they did not hear it. According to ix. 7 they saw nobody, whereas according to xxii. 9 and xxvi. 13 they saw the dazzling light. According to ix. 7

[4] See the comparative table of the three accounts on page 47.

they remained on their feet, rooted to the spot as it seems. But according to xxvi. 14 they fell to the ground. According to xxvi. 14 Jesus said to Saul: "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," words which are not found in the two other accounts. Finally, xxii. 14 puts into the month of Ananias words which xxvi. ascribes to the Saviour.

The existence of differences cannot be denied, but in the opinion of the majority of critics, they concern only details of quite secondary importance, and the historical value of the documents is not affected by them.

These divergences are not in fact due either to a dogmatic preoccupation or to literary considerations. "They are of the same nature as the differences which we always find in the most trustworthy repetitions of the same account. Their explanation is to be found in their very insignificance. They cannot in any way cast doubt on the reality of the fact. They occur in certain outlying points, at the extreme circumference of the narrative; they do not relate to the circumstances which accompanied the miracle, but to the subjective impressions which Paul's companions received in regard to these circumstances." [5] An impartial critic will rather see in them a sign of the writer's veracity, for such a careful writer as St. Luke would have made it his business to remove these apparent contradictions if he had suspected the least degree of fiction in the narrative recorded by him.

It may be stated without exaggeration that the conversion of Paul takes rank immediately after the resurrection of Jesus in a classification of the

[5] Sabatier, *L'Apôtre Paul*, 3e éd., Paris, 1896, p. 42.

miraculous events which decided the fate of Christianity, for on these two events depends, in a large measure, the strength of the motives of credibility of the traditional faith. We cannot therefore be surprised to find that these two central points of Christian apologetics have been attacked with violence by the opponents of the supernatural, and defended with equal energy by believers. The whole controversy about the sudden and unqualified change in Saul, in which both sides have given proof of equal erudition and ingenuity, has certainly resulted in throwing a greater light on the circumstances and the external conditions of this mysterious fact, but it has produced no new solution for the problem, which is first and foremost a spiritual one, and one whose data are, in their most essential part, outside the scope of scientific criticism. In short, the whole question resolves itself into an argument about the value of Paul's evidence, the genuineness and sincerity of which are questioned by none. The author of *Acts* has but reproduced conscientiously the statements of the man whose companion and confidant he had been. Further, the Apostle's character was too straightforward and honest for us to be able to suspect him of falsehood in regard to an event which, according to him, turned him away from Judaism, bound him to the person of Jesus, and thereby influenced his whole life. We must therefore examine the texts, analyse the state of mind of Saul the Pharisee and reconstruct his spiritual position at the moment when he was approaching Damascus, in order to be able to answer the question: Was he the innocent victim of an illusion?

For those who erect the denial of the supernatural

Acts ix. 3-8	Acts xxii. 6-11	Acts xxvi. 12-16
3. And as he went on his journey, it came to pass that he drew nigh to Damascus; and suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him.	6. And it came to pass as I was going, and drawing nigh to Damascus *at midday* that suddenly from heaven there shone round about me a great light.	12. Whereupon, when I was going to Damascus. . . . 13. *At midday*, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me *and them that were in company with me.*
4. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice, saying to him:	7. And falling on the ground, I heard a voice saying to me:	14. And when *we were all fallen* down on the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me *in the Hebrew tongue:* Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *It is hard for thee to kick against the goad.*
Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?	Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?	
5. And he said: Who art thou, Lord? And he: I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.	8. And I answered: Who art thou, Lord? And he said to me: I am Jesus *of Nazareth*, whom thou persecutest. 10. And I said: What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me:	15. And I said: Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord answered: I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.
6. Arise and go to the city, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7. Now the men who went in company with him stood amazed, hearing indeed a voice but seeing no man. 8. And Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw nothing. But they, leading him by the hands, brought him to Damascus. [Then follows the episode of Ananias, ix. 10-19.]	Arise, and go to Damascus and there it shall be told thee of all things that thou must do. 9. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spoke with me. 11. And whereas I did not see for the brightness of that light, being led by the hand by my companions, I came to Damascus. [Then follows the episode of Ananias, xxii. 12-16.]	16. But rise up and stand upon thy feet. [There is no mention of Ananias, but the commission which Jesus gives to Saul to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (xxvi. 16-18) is substantially in agreement with the words spoken to Ananias in ix. 15, 16, and xxii. 14, 15.]

into a principle, and believe that God, if he exists, never manifests his power by a positive intervention in the moral sphere, or in the material world, it is necessary to discover an interpretation of Paul's conversion which does not contradict this supposed self-evident axiom. This has long been attempted, and the various theories put forward in the form of psychological explanations all end by making Paul a visionary, a victim of hallucination. For some time past, we are told, his mind had been disturbed. The sight of Stephen dying and asking God's pardon for his executioners, had touched and troubled him. He had been struck by the gentleness and calmness of the persecuted Nazarenes. What he had heard of the teaching of Jesus had appeared to him, on certain points, to have an almost Divine beauty. He was haunted by the recollection of the prophecy of Isaias about the sufferings of the Servant of Yahweh, interpreted by the Christians as a prophetic picture of their Master's death. Doubting the efficacy of the Mosaic Law to produce perfect holiness in men, he asked himself where he could find a remedy for his own weakness. Naturally excitable, of a nervous and ecstatic temperament, he was just in the condition when a severe spiritual crisis would induce a physical shock and lead to a radical transformation. Now this crisis already existed for him, and it reached its height at the moment when he was approaching the end of his journey. "Every step which he took towards Damascus, awakened the most intense perplexity in his mind. The hateful rôle of executioner which he was going to play, was becoming intolerable to him. The houses which he began to catch sight of, were perhaps those of

his victims. This thought oppressed him, and made him slacken his pace; he would have liked to stop; he felt as if he were resisting a goad which urged him on. The fatigue of the journey, joined to this anxiety, overwhelmed him. In long marches of this kind, it is the last hours that are the most dangerous. All the weakening influences of the past days are accumulated in them; nervous energy is relaxed; a reaction takes place. Perhaps also the hurried passage over the sun-scorched plain to the cool shades of the gardens precipitated a seizure in the delicate and overstrained system of the fanatic. Attacks of dangerous fever, accompanied with delirium, are liable to come on suddenly in these latitudes. When the attack is over, the patient retains the impression of an intense darkness, broken by flashes of light, which reveal clouds outlined against a black background. All that we can say for certain is that some dreadful stroke deprived Paul in an instant of all the distinct consciousness that he had retained, and threw him senseless to the ground. It is impossible to say if any external event caused the crisis which gained for Christianity its most devoted apostle. It is not improbable, however, that a storm had suddenly broken out. The slopes of Mount Hermon are the starting-point of thunder-claps whose violence nothing can equal. To the Jews in particular, thunder was always the voice of God. Paul was in the grip of extreme nervous excitement. It is only natural that he should have heard the storm utter what his own heart told him. In the midst of the hallucinations to which all his senses became a prey, what did he see, what did he hear? He saw the figure which had been haunting him for days; he

saw the phantom about which so many stories were told. Impetuous characters pass at one step from one extreme to the other. Men of reflection do not change; they undergo a transformation. Enthusiasts, on the contrary, change without any transformation. In the space of a few seconds Paul's mind was crowded with all his most profound thoughts. He was pierced to the heart, convulsed through the length and breadth of his being. But, in the event, he had merely changed the subject of his fanaticism." [6]

This explanation, however brilliant and ingenious it may be, indicates more imagination than true historical sense in its author, for it is out of harmony with the facts, and contradicts the declaration of the Apostle. It is nothing but a piece of sleight of hand, perfect as the artist's skill may be; we looked for a historian, and we find only a conjurer. Every sound criticism must first of all take the facts into account, for nothing can change them or make them cease to exist. Now, it is established that up to the moment of his meeting with Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul was a Pharisee, a persecutor of the Christians, and that from that precise moment onwards, he was an ardent disciple of Jesus. Moreover he knows absolutely nothing either of any internal activity which slowly brought him nearer to the Gospel, nor of any spiritual crisis which led him to Christ by the way of remorse and fear, nor of any physical shock which produced an unnatural excitation of his senses. " The recollection of his conversion which he retained all his life, was that of a cataclysmic event, which overtook him in the midst of his

[6] Renan, *Les Apôtres*, pp. 179-183.

Pharisaism, and flung him, in his own despite, into a new path. He was conquered and tamed by main force[7]—a defeated rebel whom God leads in triumph through the nations." [8] Where can we find arguments strong enough to prevail against such definite evidence as this?

On the other hand, what right have we to call in question the repeated declarations of Paul about the objective reality of the vision which determined his conversion? In the epistle to the Galatians,[9] he states that a personal revelation of Jesus was the starting-point of his call to the Apostolate, and he indicates precisely its time and place. In the first epistle to the Corinthians, he places the emphasis on the external reality of this vision on which depend his title and status as an Apostle. "Am I not an Apostle?" he writes passionately. "Have not I seen Jesus our Lord?" [10] Now, unless the word *see* is understood here in its most material sense, Paul's argument loses all its force. In the same epistle, recalling the various appearances of the risen Christ, he places on the same level the one which was bestowed on himself and those of which the Twelve were witnesses: "last of all, he was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time." [11] Would it have been possible to express better the objective character of the apparition on the road to Damascus, or to describe better the suddenness and violence of the Divine intervention which had removed him sharply and as it were *before the due time* from the womb of Judaism.

[7] Phil. iii. 12.
[8] Sabatier, *Saint Paul*, p. 43. (3rd ed.)
[9] Gal. i. 12, 15, 16.
[10] 1 Cor. ix. 1.
[11] 1 Cor. xv. 5-8

In fine, even supposing Paul had been by nature predisposed to visions and hallucinations—which is not proved and would be hard to reconcile with that practical and methodical mind, and that calm will which are revealed in all the actions of his Apostolic life—still there would be nothing to prove that he did not really see the human form of Christ, in that moment when the orientation of his life was fixed, for no vision or hallucination can suffice to explain such a revolution and such a transformation. An imagined vision does not in its own strength produce conversion, any more than desire alone can give birth to the reality. Paul was favoured in later times with ecstatic visions; he discloses the fact, but in a tone of reserve, as if he felt a repugnance to laying bare this secret side of his relations with God, whereas in his preaching he loved on the contrary to speak of the cause and circumstances of his conversion. In fact, he took great care not to include among these ecstatic visions the manifestation on the road to Damascus, as if he had a very clear perception of a difference in nature between the two classes of favour.[12] The only cause therefore of Saul's conversion that remains possible is the one he has himself given: the personal intervention of Jesus risen. At the moment when he was thrown to the ground, not far from the city where he was going in order to persecute the disciples of the Nazarene, there occurred a real meeting between him and Christ.

[12] 2 Cor. xii. 1-10. The second epistle to the Corinthians was written from Macedonia towards the end of the summer of 57. As Paul says expressly that he experienced his first vision fourteen years before, say in 43 or 44, this cannot be identified with that of 36, i.e., that which caused his conversion.

We know what profound and mysterious effects often follow the mere meeting of two human beings in the ordinary relations of life. One glance or just the tone of a voice frequently suffices to subdue heart or mind. Our impression of a man is generally very different according as we know him by hearsay or personally, and in numbers of cases direct acquaintance curiously changes the feelings of sympathy or of hostility which precede the first meeting. So it happened with Paul in that unforgettable moment when he felt his inmost being totally transformed.

Of course an element of mystery remains, but this fact does not in any way affect the historical character of the event. Every candid and unprejudiced mind will admit, after a minute and impartial examination of the texts, that the various explanations put forward by those who deny the possibility of God's intervention in the world, only succeed in displacing the miracle and moving it to another point. The enigma persists undiminished, even on the hypothesis—inadmissible on other grounds—of a vision caused by a spiritual crisis or of a hallucination induced by a physical commotion, for even if a harassed and over-excited imagination can engender phantasms, the most stable and tenacious phantasms could never create a life.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATION FOR THE APOSTOLATE

It is sometimes thought that St. Paul began his great work of preaching the Gospel immediately after his conversion and started out on his missionary journeys as soon as he had embraced the faith of Christ. This abridgement of the matter, with its sharp contrasts, may be attractive and suggestive, but it does not correspond to history. Eight or nine years, in fact, have still to elapse before the new apostle first sets out on the roads of Asia Minor and of Europe, and undertakes the conquest of the pagan world. The interval between his conversion and the first of his great missions, is taken up by a period of apprenticeship and training, marked by experiments and tentative efforts. Besides, the circumstances were not yet ripe for an Apostolate on such a vast scale, for the new-born Church, scarcely out of its swaddling-clothes, was very timid about setting its foot outside the land of Israel.

I. In Arabia and at Damascus

I went into Arabia, and again I returned to Damascus. (Gal. i. 17.)

Like any other catechumen, Paul must have received, at the time of his baptism, a short statement of the fundamental points of Christian doctrine.

It is true that Ananias had been sent to him to baptize him and to make known to him the mission to which God called him;[1] there was therefore no question of instruction in the strict sense; but the head of the Christian community at Damascus had conversations with Saul during the days that followed his baptism,[2] and he would naturally tell the convert all that he himself had been taught about Jesus of Nazareth, about his personality, actions, words, death and resurrection. What subject could be dearer to the heart and mind of the man who only a few days before had seen and heard the risen Lord and who now desired to live only for him?

In the meantime, the rumour spread at Damascus, both in Jewish circles and in the groups of the disciples of Jesus, that Saul of Tarsus, Scribe and Pharisee, had been converted to the faith of Christ. The news must at first have been received with incredulity, so improbable did it seem. Then after it had been confirmed by exact and direct evidence, doubt was no longer possible. In the ghetto violent passions were aroused as stupefaction gave place to rage, while in the Christian community, the believers saw in this event a sign of God's protection and were filled with joy.

Owing to the strong feeling and excitement of which he was the cause, Saul was unable to secure in Damascus that which his heart and soul stood most in need of, namely, tranquil surroundings and interior recollection. He felt himself to be the object of general curiosity, suffered from being the target of the hostility of the Jews, who now regarded him as a renegade, and found himself a little isolated

[1] Acts ix. 10-17. [2] Acts ix. 19.

in the midst of those whose brother he had suddenly become, after having hated them and devised their ruin. He remained under the influence of the moral shock which had bruised and transformed his inner self, and he experienced a strong desire to shun for the time the society of men in order to live with God only, in meditation and prayer. Thus he decided, some days after his baptism, to leave Ananias, and look for peace in some lonely spot away from Damascus.[3] Paul went to Arabia.[4] We cannot determine the precise spot where he took refuge, as the name Arabia denotes that immense territory which stretches from Syria to the Persian Gulf, and from the Euphrates to the Red Sea. We may suppose it was either the Sinai peninsula or the Nabatean kingdom, whose capital was Petra, or the Syrian desert in the strict sense, or again Hauran, close to Damascus. Although the first hypothesis is supported by Gal. iv. 25, where "Arabia" denotes the country which surrounds Mount Sinai, the last one seems the most probable.

Our records are equally deficient with regard to the exact duration of this journey and this stay in Arabia. According to some opinions, Paul returned to Damascus in a few weeks; others think that he was away from the city for about two years. The second view, it seems to me, is more in harmony with the succeeding account in Acts. There we see that three years after his conversion the Apostle met with a worse than cold reception from the Christians of Jerusalem, who distrusted the motives of the former persecutor,[5] a thing which is not easy

[3] In Gal. i. 16, 17, Paul expressly says that he departed immediately.

[4] Gal. i. 17.

[5] Acts ix. 26.

to explain if Paul had preached for months at Damascus, for there was sufficient intercourse between the two communities to ensure that a fact of this importance would soon come to the ears of the brethren of the mother-church.

Saul therefore lived a long time in Arabia, in seclusion and solitude.[6] It was a period of prayer and reflection, during which his religious education was completed, thanks to the light of Divine revelation. The Scriptures now began to acquire a new meaning in his eyes; what had before seemed obscure to him became clear now that God had made known to him his Son;[7] the sacred text was transfigured; the prophecies stood out in strong relief, like words written in letters of fire on a background of darkness; the material and literal signification of the words was overshadowed by their spiritual force. / At the summit and at the end of the history of Israel shone the figure of Jesus, dying on the cross for the salvation of sinful humanity and thus uniting mankind to his own life. Paul realized that everything converged towards Christ, the beginning and end of all created beings. The mystery of the redemption of the world became for him a visible and living reality, round which all truths of the religious, moral and historical orders were arranged as round their centre of gravity. On this one foundation was built up and perfected the unity of his convictions, on this rested the synthesis

[6] It does not appear that Paul engaged in any missionary work during his stay in Arabia, for we have no evidence of the existence of Christian communities in this region till much later, after A.D. 70, when the fall of Jerusalem had caused the general exodus of the Christians of Judæa.

[7] Gal. i. 16; Phil. iii. 8.

of his reason and his feeling, on this depended the harmony of his sensitive, intellectual, and supernatural life. Everything is explained in the light of the Saviour's death and resurrection: thereby the Divine plan has been realized; thereby the spiritual society of believers has been created, the mystical body of Christ the Redeemer; thereby mankind has been transformed, renewed, regenerated. Thus the earthly life of Jesus is all summed up in the cross, and is crowned by his sacrifice; in the same way, the life of every man who believes in him has its starting point in the immolation of the Divine victim. The message of salvation is addressed not only to the Jews but to every human being; the Mosaic Law, incapable now of bringing justification to the sinner, has no longer any reason for its existence, and the Gentiles must be exempted from all the practices and observances commanded by it.

These ideas, which are the basis of Paul's apostolate, and which constantly recur in his teaching, took distinct shape in his mind during his period of solitude, under the influence of the illumination which God shed over his previous knowledge, and with the assistance of a progressive revelation which presented new truths to his intellect. The double action of grace and reflection enriched his mind, matured his thought, and strengthened his understanding in the sphere of spiritual realities. No doubt there will still be room for a further development of his theological ideas; they will acquire an ever-increasing consistency, in proportion as circumstances demand their defence or their exposition; but we may hold it as certain that Paul already had them all in his mind on the day when he returned to Damascus, for

the purpose of preaching in his turn the Gospel of Jesus, which had now become his own Gospel.[8]

The Jews were numerous in this city, and they possessed several synagogues there. Paul turned to these, in order to win them to the faith of Christ. From the first he boldly followed the example of Stephen and attacked his former co-religionists on their own territory, addressing them in their religious assemblies, telling them that Jesus was the promised and expected Messias.[9] Such a declaration on the lips of a man who had formerly made himself conspicuous by his zeal as a Pharisee, was invested with a singular authority and meaning. The hearers could not believe their ears, so startling did the matter appear to them. People remembered that this same Tarsian scribe, at present the disciple of the Nazarene, had come to Damascus two years before with a commission to hunt out Christians, arrest them and convey them to Jerusalem.[10] But they remembered also that he had at that time been seen forming a connection with the head of the abhorred sect. It was therefore true that he had denied the faith of his fathers, and fallen into the error of the Nazarenes.

Meanwhile, Paul went on preaching, and developing all the time the theme of the Messianic character of Jesus, setting it forth with an impressive conviction and supporting it with unanswerable arguments.[11] The subject was a delicate one for him, especially in view of his past; and it was not long before it became dangerous. The animosity of the Jews quickly revealed itself and rapidly reached a height.

[8] Gal. i. 17.
[9] Acts ix. 20.
[10] Acts ix. 21.
[11] Acts ix. 22.

Unable to answer or refute the preacher, whose success was a scandal to the ghetto and a peril to traditional Judaism, Paul's enemies resolved to suppress him. This operation presented some difficulties, but the holiest of all causes was at stake.

Circumstances were so favourable to them that a *coup de main* could be attempted with a good prospect of success. The relaxation of the Roman authority, which followed the death of Tiberius, had allowed Aretas, the Nabatean monarch who reigned over a portion of Arabia, to seize Damascus some months before this date. The Jews succeeded in making sure of the connivance, and even of the assistance, of the Nabatean governor.[12] The latter ordered the city gates to be guarded that Paul might not be able to escape those who were charged to arrest him. But the plan failed in spite of all the precautions of its authors. The infamous plot became known to a Christian, who warned Saul to remain securely concealed in a friend's house. Then, in the night-time, the brethren placed him in a large basket which they let down by means of a rope, either from a postern in the wall or from a window looking out on the open country.[13]

In this way the ex-Pharisee took to flight in his turn from the dangers created by the fanaticism of which he himself, some years before, had been the apologist and the instrument.

[12] The presence of this Nabatean officer at Damascus is easily explained by the fact that Aretas had made himself master of the city when Vitellius, the Legate of Syria, desisted, in the spring of 37, from the expedition he had undertaken against Petra at the command of Tiberius.

[13] Acts ix. 23-25; 2 Cor. xi. 32-33.

II. Visit to Jerusalem

After three years I went to Jerusalem to see Peter.
(Gal. i. 18.)

On leaving Damascus the fugitive raised his eyes towards Jerusalem. It may surprise us that he had not done so sooner, for about three years had passed away since the day of his conversion.[14] But Paul's attitude as regards the mother-church is explained by his profound feeling of having received his call from Jesus Christ himself; it was the voice of the risen Jesus which had made him a disciple and an Apostle on the road to Damascus. As he had no need of the consent of the official leaders of the Church or of any further investiture conferring on him a place in the hierarchy, he had refrained of deliberate purpose from visiting those who had been engaged in the work of Apostles before him. And if he does now appear at Jerusalem, the birthplace of the Gospel, it is not with any intention of completing his religious education, or of asking for support or recognition, but simply in order to see Peter and to speak with him. At the same time, this visit was a sort of homage paid to the authority of the head of the Church.

Paul traversed in the opposite direction the road which he had followed when he went from Jerusalem to Damascus to persecute the Christians. What a change had been wrought in him, in his thoughts, feelings, and desires! And what strange emotions

[14] Gal. i. 18. This first visit to Jerusalem must be placed between the end of 38 and the middle of 39, according as we understand by "three years" three whole years or two years and a fraction.

he must have felt from stage to stage of this journey! He looked again on the spot where Jesus had appeared to him. As he followed the southern shore of Lake Tiberias, he had before his eyes the horizon which had been his Master's during his Galilean ministry. Along the way which led to the Holy City through the countries of Samaria and Judæa, he might endeavour to retrace the steps of the Saviour who, years before, had passed that way with his Apostles. At the moment of entering the deicide city, was not his heart drawn by a strong impulse towards the rocky hill which rose not far from the Gate of Benjamin, a hundred paces from the Gate of Ephraim, Golgotha, where the cross of Christ had been erected, and where the redeeming sacrifice had been offered? There is nothing chimerical about such a supposition, when we remember the place that that cross now occupied in Paul's life.

The traveller no doubt sought the hospitality of his sister's house, and then looked round for some means of meeting Peter. The believers to whom he applied and disclosed his object, recognizing in him the ferocious enemy whose remembrance was still vivid in every mind, met him with reserve, fearing some perfidious trick, and remained deaf to his advances. Nobody dared trust his words; they could not believe in such a radical transformation; they shunned his company.[15] Paul found himself in a completely false position, which moreover threatened to be prolonged and even complicated, when a man of generous heart and broad mind extended a welcome to the former persecutor and intervened in his favour.

[15] Acts ix. 26.

This man's name was Barnabas. He was a Greek-speaking Jew, born in Cyprus, one of the earliest converts to Christianity, and highly respected among the Christians at Jerusalem. He had some time before sold a piece of land that he owned in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and had paid the price into the common fund of the Church.[16] Barnabas belonged to that Hellenist circle which had counted Stephen among its leaders; he therefore had long known Saul; perhaps he had even met him at the feet of Gamaliel. He came to him and frankly held out his hand to him; he made himself responsible for him to the brethren at Jerusalem, and himself presented him to Peter. He related how the Lord had appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, and how the new convert had already given proof of his faith in the great Syrian city.[17] The ice was broken and distrust banished. From this moment Saul was admitted to the confidence of the believers, living with them and going about Jerusalem in their company.[18] He had long conversations with Peter,[19] in whom he saw the most authoritative witness of the death and resurrection of Jesus.[20] With the exception of James, the Lord's brother, the other members of the Apostolic college were at the time absent from Jerusalem, employed in the evangelization of Samaria and Judæa.

Paul entered into theological arguments with the Greek-speaking Jews of Jerusalem, who reacted violently, as they had done earlier in the presence of Stephen's insistent arguments, and assumed all at once a threatening attitude.

[16] Acts iv. 36, 37.
[17] Acts ix. 27.
[18] Acts ix. 28.
[19] Gal. i. 18.
[20] 1 Cor. xv. 5.

In order to prevent mischief, the Christians advised the ardent preacher to disappear. A command from Heaven was given to him to the same effect. While he was praying in the Temple he fell into an ecstasy, and saw Jesus himself, who enjoined him to depart immediately: "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, because they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." And when Saul pleaded to be allowed to remain, the Lord added: "Go, for unto the Gentiles afar off will I send thee." [21] It was an express command, and there was no longer any room for hesitation.

The brethren therefore took him down to Cæsarea on the coast, whence Tarsus in Cilicia could easily be reached by means of one of the numerous vessels engaged in the coastal trade.[22] Paul's stay at Jerusalem had lasted only two weeks.[23]

III. In Cilicia and at Antioch

And Barnabas went to Tarsus to seek Saul. (Acts xi. 25.)

For the second time Saul returned to his home, but his life had received a new orientation since he had left his family, and they must have been intensely surprised to hear him relate the story of his conversion and speak with love of Christ Jesus. We may well believe that they were won by him to the Christian faith, for it is only natural that Paul's Apostolic labours in Cilicia should begin with those

[21] Acts xxii. 17-21.
[22] Acts ix. 30; Gal. i. 21.
[23] Gal. i. 18.

who were united to him by ties of blood and affection.[24]

The sometime Pharisee appeared again in the synagogues of Tarsus, and there expounded the Gospel message to his compatriots. He then began to travel about Cilicia. Our records are a complete blank as regards these journeys and exhortations, of which we only know that they lasted for several years, from 39 to 42. Nevertheless, it seems likely that this first mission produced good fruit, because a decade later, in 49-50, Christian communities in Cilicia are dealt with in the Apostolic decree,[25] and when Paul set out on his second journey in Asia Minor, he visited these churches "confirming them."[26]

While Saul was evangelizing his own province, Christianity made marked progress, not only in Palestine, but also outside the limits of the ancient kingdom of Israel. The persecution following on the death of Stephen had caused the dispersion of the believers, many of whom, after wandering along the coast of Phœnicia, had found their way as far as Antioch, while others had taken refuge in Judæa or Samaria, or in the coast towns or again in Damascus. We have seen above that Christian communities had at this time been formed in various centres in Syria; the message of salvation had been carried as far as Cyprus.[27] The new evangelists carried on their propaganda under the

[24] Certain commentators think that the relations greeted by Paul in Rom. xvi. 7, 11, 21, were members of his own family.

[25] Acts xv. 23.

[26] Acts xv. 41.

[27] Acts ix. 10, 25; xi. 19.

form that was followed at Jerusalem and remained faithful to the principle of addressing themselves only to Jews or proselytes. It is true that Cornelius of Cæsarea had been admitted into the Church; but this initiation of a pagan into the Christian religion was an exceptional case: a special revelation had been necessary before Peter felt authorized to baptize the centurion, and the head of the Christian community at Jerusalem was obliged to justify his action to his brethren.[28]

It was at Antioch that believers—men coming from Cyprus and Cyrene—first ventured to speak of Christ to the Gentiles. Departing from the rule hitherto followed, they took the bold step of proposing their faith to men who were not circumcised, without requiring of them circumcision as a preliminary condition to baptism[29]—a daring innovation, the consequences of which were destined to be decisive for the expansion of Christianity, since it led in practice to the omission of the Mosaic observances for Christian converts from paganism, and thus prepared the way for the formal abrogation of the Jewish Law. This progaganda was addressed particularly to pagans who were already more or less in sympathy with Judaism, and who under the name of "those who feared God" formed an outer circle round each synagogue. It was carried on at first without the knowledge of the rulers of the mother-church at Jerusalem, and it was completely successful in the atmosphere of Antioch, more favourable than any other to such an innovation.[30]

[28] Acts x. 1; xi. 18.

[29] Acts xi. 20: "And there were some among them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who spoke also to the Greeks, preaching to them the Lord Jesus."

[30] Acts xi. 21.

Antioch the Great ranked immediately after Rome and Alexandria as regards population. Though not devoid of intellectual life, it was first and foremost a business centre, whose greatness depended on its commerce. The Seleucids who had used it as their capital for three centuries had laboured to adorn it with magnificent buildings and to make it the metropolis of the East. After their time, the Romans had made it the seat of the imperial legate of Syria. Situated on the Orontes, which gave it direct communication with the port of Seleucia, the great city was protected by high walls which had a circumference of ten miles. The population was very mixed, and included Syrians, who formed the indigenous element in it, and much the largest, Greeks, Jews, and Romans. Even more completely than at Tarsus, all the religions and all the superstitions of the East were to be met with here. Particularly notorious for its licentious morals, the Syrian capital had become, in the first century of our era, " the sink of all infamies; spiritual degradation in it was dreadful; that stream of filth which, issuing from the mouth of the Orontes, was beginning to overwhelm Rome, had here one of its principal sources." [31] The Jewish colony at Antioch, whose beginnings dated from the reign of Seleucus Nicanor (312-281) was very numerous, and had an imposing number of proselytes grouped around it.[32] One of these proselytes, named Nicolas, was a member of the committee of seven appointed at the request of the Hellenists at

[31] Renan, *Les Apôtres*, 22e ed., pp. 218, 219, 221.
[32] Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, XII, 3, 1; XIV, 12, 6; and *De Bello Jud.*, II, 18, 5; VII, 3, 2-4.

Jerusalem to supervise the daily distribution of food.[33]

Such was the environment in which the missionaries from Cyprus and Cyrene began to preach without distinction to Jews and Gentiles, telling them all about the Lord Jesus, enlisting for Christ the uncircumcised as well as the circumcised. When the news was known at Jerusalem, the leaders of the Apostolic community, confronted with the *fait accompli*, decided to send Barnabas to Antioch, as much in order to control as to confirm and ratify the results obtained.[34] The man who had so generously and so loyally held out a hand to Saul, was able to understand the situation and to make the best possible use of it. Not only did he offer no opposition to the method followed by the Antiochene evangelists, but he decided that it was in conformity with the principles of the Gospel. He therefore gave his entire approval to all that had been done, and exerted himself actively to develop the work that had been so well begun.[35] Meanwhile, when conversions became more and more numerous, Barnabas had the idea of asking for the help of a man on whose zeal he built the highest hopes. He determined to associate Paul with himself as his fellow-worker. For this purpose he went to Tarsus, found the man he was looking for, and brought him to Antioch.[36]

For a whole year Barnabas and Paul worked together on this soil where the word of God sprouted and ripened so fast the seed-time and harvest were almost one. Paul was filled with joy

[33] Acts vi. 1-5.
[34] Acts xi. 22.
[35] Acts xi. 23, 24.
[36] Acts xi. 25, 26.

at the sight of such a flourishing church, whose religious vitality revealed itself in the marvellous gifts bestowed on many of its members. Prophets and teachers were to be seen there.[37] The prophets, inspired by the Holy Ghost, in moments of spiritual exaltation edified the believers with their moral exhortations and their revelations relating to practical life; the teachers discharged the task of doctrinal instruction; they taught the catechumens, established the newly converted, and at the meetings of the church set forth the mysteries of the Faith. The young community was soon so numerous that even in the midst of that immense city it forced itself on the attention of the public. It was then that for the first time the name of Christians was given to the disciples of Christ by those who heard them repeat the word *Christos*.[38] The name originated with the pagans; it was none the less accepted as an honourable title by those whom it denoted, and it gradually supplanted the name "Nazarenes."[39]

It was probably at Antioch, in the course of this year 43, the happiest perhaps of his life, that Paul was favoured with that great ecstasy of which he was to speak afterwards in his second letter to the Corinthians: "I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up to the third heaven; and I

[37] Acts xiii. 1.

[38] The word Christos was not originally a personal name. Like its Hebrew equivalent, Messiah, of which it was but the Greek translation, it expressed the Messianic character of Jesus. But it was used as a proper name almost from the beginning of the Gospel.

[39] Acts xi. 26.

know such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I know not: God knoweth) that he was caught up into paradise and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter." [40] As the epistle was written in 57, the mysterious event to which Paul alludes may be dated in 43. We must suppose it was some quite singular favour, of the nature of an ecstatic vision, of which all we can say with certainty is that it left on the soul of the Apostle an unforgettable impression, both because of the Divine splendours of which he had a glimpse, and because of the spiritual joy which filled his soul.

Barnabas and Paul had been working for a year at the evangelization of Antioch, when some prophets from Jerusalem came on the scene. One day, one of these, named Agabus, rose in the midst of the assembled community and announced that a famine was very shortly going to afflict the land.[41] We know from ancient historians that in the reign of Claudius local famines were numerous, and that there was a more widespread one in the year 44. The faithful at Antioch saw in this warning an appeal to their charity on behalf of their brethren at Jerusalem. The material and financial situation of the mother-church was one almost of beggary; community of property had led to irremediable misery, and the ever-increasing burden of hospitality aggravated an already lamentable state of things. Barnabas was better acquainted with all this than anybody. A collection was therefore organized for the purpose of assisting the Apostolic community, which the famine thus prophesied would inevitably reduce to

[40] 2 Cor. xii. 2-4. [41] Acts xi. 27-28.

extremities. When the money had been collected, Barnabas and Paul were commissioned to carry it to the brethren in Judæa.[42] Paul paid his second visit to Jerusalem after his conversion.

The two delegates arrived in the Holy City in the spring of 44. They found the faithful dispersed, for King Agrippa I, at the instigation of the high priests and the Sanhedrin, had just ordered violent measures against the disciples of Jesus.[43] Pharisaic Judaism had again turned persecutor as in the worst days of the year 36. James the Greater, the son of Zebedee and the brother of John, had been arrested, and then, without any legal trial, beheaded by the arbitrary decision of the monarch, as John the Baptist had once been.[44] In the same way Peter was thrown into prison; he was kept in the citadel, the Antonia, and his enemies, who had resolved on his death, only waited for the end of the solemnities of the Pasch before they brought him before the supreme tribunal.[45] While the other Apostles had thought it wisest to bow before the storm and leave Jerusalem, James, the brother of the Lord, had remained amidst all its fury. Barnabas and Paul

[42] Acts xi. 30.

[43] Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, and the son of Aristobulus and Bernice, was born in 10 B.C. Brought up in Rome, at the imperial court, he had led a life of luxury and extravagance till the day when he was imprisoned by the order of Tiberius. Caligula, whose friend he was, had released him and entrusted to him the government of the tetrarchies of Philip, of Lysanias, and of Antipas. When Claudius had given him Judæa and Samaria, the successful adventurer found himself at the head of a larger kingdom than his grandfather's. The Acts calls him " Herod the king " to distinguish him from his uncle, Antipas, called " Herod the tetrarch."

[44] Acts xii. 1, 2.

[45] Acts xii. 3-6.

handed him the alms of which they were the bearers, and without making any stay in the Holy City they turned back towards Antioch. They took with them a young cousin of Barnabas's, John, also called Mark.[46]

Some days later Peter was miraculously delivered from prison.[47] As for King Agrippa, he was soon destined to be smitten by the Divine chastisement: going to Cæsarea to attend the public games held in honour of Claudius, he died suddenly there.[48]

As soon as they had returned to Antioch, after giving an account of their commission, Barnabas and Paul placed before their brethren a project which they had slowly formed in the course of the foregoing months and which they were now eager to execute. They had decided to undertake together a series of missionary journeys in order to carry the message of salvation into the most distant countries. Their plan of evangelization embraced the whole world. The Church approved the generous resolution and welcomed a scheme which gave room for immense hopes. The prophets and the teachers, after praying and fasting, laid their hands on Barnabas and Paul to consecrate them for their office of evangelists, and to bestow on them the spiritual powers which they would have to exercise in their coming ministry.[49] In order to spare themselves distractions of a secular character, the two missionaries took Mark as their companion. Antioch therefore was going to be the true centre of Christian missionary work, now that two members of the Antiochene church were setting out for the conquest of the pagan world.

[46] Acts xii. 25.
[47] Acts xii. 7-17.
[48] Acts xii. 19-23.
[49] Acts xiii. 1-3.

The island of Cyprus, the home of Barnabas, had to be visited first of all; the messengers of the good news therefore travelled to Seleucia, the great Mediterranean port which was joined to Antioch by the Orontes and by a carriage road. It is probable that they were accompanied so far by several of their brethren. A ship was just starting for Salamis in Cyprus. They bade one another farewell on the quay, invoking the name of the Lord Jesus, and the missionaries took their places on board. We may well imagine that their eyes were bright and their souls elated with boundless hope. The sailors would have been intensely surprised if anyone had told them that these unpretentious passengers would be the conquerors of the Greco-Roman world, and that the epic of these new Argonauts would surpass, in its beauty and grandeur, the exploits of the glorious heroes of Greece. The wind filled the sails and the vessel stood out to sea: it contained within it the sowers of Divine life.[50]

[50] Acts xiii. 4.

CHAPTER V

THE APOSTOLATE—SCENE, CONDITIONS AND METHOD

I became all things to all men that I might save all.
(1 Cor. ix. 22.)

For the first time the ship of Peter had now reached the high sea, with Barnabas and Paul at its helm: it is always an exciting moment when navigators plunge into unknown seas. The former Scribe of Tarsus now began that missionary career in which he was destined for a score of years to exhibit an energy which has no parallel, and to bring into play all the resources of his genius as a conqueror and as organizer.

It may be supposed that at the very beginning his bold eye surveyed the various Roman provinces which, from Syria to Spain and from the Arabian desert to the Pillars of Hercules, were ranged in order around the Mediterranean basin. Paul's ideas were always big; he never had any doubts about the power of Christianity to expand. His burning zeal was founded on profound faith and on passionate love of Christ; it was very natural that his mind should be drawn to the loftiest conceptions, to the most daring plans. He was engaged on nothing less than the work of carrying the Gospel to the farthest limits of the known world.

The countries which the missionaries proposed to visit had been pervaded by Greco-Roman civilization.

The island of Cyprus, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achæa, were all under the power of Rome. In these countries the authority of the legates or proconsuls which represented the central power was supreme. Thanks to the military forces which these governors had at their disposal, peace was as a rule maintained, and security generally assured. At this period it was possible without any great danger to travel anywhere along the roads of the vast empire, and to sail over any part of the Mediterranean. In the inland districts the great roads were patrolled and protected; the attacks of highwaymen became more and more rare, except in some corners where the population had not yet been completely subdued. As for the pirates, who a century before had terrorized the coasts of Cilicia and Pamphylia, they had been severely chastised by Pompey and by others after him. On all sides the Romans had made a clean sweep of brigands and corsairs.

Travelling was easiest by sea. Besides the government fleet which was equipped and armed for war, there were merchant vessels. Their owners and captains took passengers as well as cargo. The number of these passengers was sometimes considerable. Thus when the Jewish historian, Josephus, went to Rome, he took passage on a ship which was carrying six hundred persons; for the same voyage, Paul as a prisoner was placed on a vessel which had on board two hundred and seventy-six persons, counting sailors and passengers.[1] During the voyage poor people lived on the deck, with the crew; the sum they had to pay as passage-money was moderate; sometimes all that was asked was that they should give their

[1] Acts xxvii. 37.

help in working the ship and in various tasks which did not require any skill. On the other hand a man had to be prepared for serious loss of time. The period of a voyage might vary considerably for the same route, according to the wind, the visibility of the sky, and the state of the sea. This is the reason why Paul spent on one occasion two days[2] and on another five[3] in crossing from Troas to Neapolis. In the Ægean, as a rule, and in proximity to any coasts, no sailing was done at night. Under these circumstances, there could be no regular times either for departure or for arrival. Finally, during the rough months of winter, navigation was almost at a standstill; it began every year in spring and ceased in October.

Travelling by land was quite as slow. Paul and the first missionaries went on foot from place to place, and the average day's journey of a pedestrian did not exceed seven or eight leagues. On the great Roman roads military posts were to be found, and khans or caravanserais for spending the night in; on the other roads the night's lodging depended on luck. In the first century of our era the road system of Asia Minor and Macedonia was in perfect condition. A road at once commercial and strategic, traversed Asia Minor from west to east. Beginning at Troas, a port on the Ægean, it ran to Pergamum, Sardis, and Philadelphia; at Laodicea it was joined by another road coming from Ephesus, then it forked: one branch went to Attalia, on the coast of Pamphylia, and another to Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, the Cicilian Gates, and Tarsus. In Macedonia the famous Egnatian Way

[2] Acts xvi. 11. [3] Acts xx. 6.

ran from Neapolis to Dyrrhachium, joining the Ægean to the Adriatic, through Philippi, Amphipolis, Thessalonica, and Pella.

For many years Paul was going to lead, on land and sea, the life of an itinerant preacher. What privations, fatigues and dangers were to be his share! He was to go from one stranger's house to another, from ghetto to ghetto; he was to suffer hunger and thirst; he was to travel in every season of the year; in winter, when swollen torrents made the way almost impossible; the sea was often destined to be cruel to him; he had to search for work in order to provide for his maintenance; his enemies were to calumniate him, to induce the local authorities to arrest him or expel him, and to stick at nothing in order to ruin his work; sometimes the Roman police was to treat him with insolence and brutality. Nowhere would he be safe from trial and peril. To be convinced of this it is only necessary to re-read that page in the second epistle to the Corinthians where he has given a brief sketch of his labours and sufferings: " . . . in many more labours, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea. In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren, in labour and painfulness, in much watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, besides those things which are without: my daily instance, the

solicitude for all the churches."[4] These lines were written in 57, and for another ten years Paul was to lead the same kind of life!

From the nature of things, the dissemination of Christianity had to begin in the ports of the Mediterranean, that is, along the coasts, and next in the great centres which marked the principal stages on the first-class roads of the interior. It would have been very difficult to reach the still half-barbarous populations which were scattered in the rural parts, and which had only a very imperfect comprehension of the Greek language. Moreover, it seems very likely that the Apostle always conceived his plan of evangelization after the style of a general, who aims only at the important points, occupies them, organizes them methodically, and makes them the base or starting-point of new operations. However overmastering his zeal might be, Paul was always governed and guided by solid reason. His activity shows no sign, either of feverish impatience or precipitate haste. Like a wise sower he is very careful not to fling the seed of the Gospel broadcast to every wind on any and every soil; he endeavours to sow only on good ground, he will watch over the sprouting, he will tend the growth; afterwards he will re-visit as often as possible the field he has sown, or at least will see that one or other of his helpers comes to visit it. His missionary journeys have no resemblance to that of a judge on circuit. He stayed for long periods in the centres where a Christian nucleus became formed, and as often as possible he superintended in person the first developments of the community. The perusal of the *Acts of the Apostles*

[4] 2 Cor. xi. 23-28.

sometimes leaves a different impression on the mind, indeed even a contrary one; but we must not forget that the events are presented there in a very concentrated summary, and that this compression is often liable to falsify the true perspective. We shall realize the justice of this statement as we follow the description of the first missionary journey, whose duration was not less than three years, perhaps as much as four. The evangelization of Antioch in Pisidia, of Iconium, of Lystra, and of Derbe, went on for months, just as that of Corinth or that of Ephesus did in later journeys.

Paul, moreover, needed these stationary periods in order to earn his living. He took advantage of them to resume his occupation of weaver.[5] He had set his heart on providing for his food and lodging by his own work; he even made it a point of honour not to receive money from anyone. This was first of all a matter of delicacy and of charity in his mind: he was anxious not to be a burden to any of his brethren, although he admitted the principle according to which every apostle could rightly live at the expense of the church;[6] it was in the second place a matter of good example and of practical morality: he wished to be the foremost in practising the rule which he gave to the faithful: "If any man will not work, neither let him eat."[7] His scrupulous fidelity to this principle enables him to write to the Thessalonians: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nothing, but in labour and in toil we worked night and day lest we should be chargeable

[5] Acts xviii. 3; xx. 34; 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8; 1 Cor. iv. 12.
[6] Gal. vi. 6; 1 Cor. ix. 4-14.
[7] 2 Thess. iii. 10.

to any of you."[8] And to say to the Ephesians: "You yourselves know that, for such things as were needful for me and them that are with me, these hands have furnished."[9] Thus in one complete side of his outward life, Paul was just like the people, most of them of humble condition, to whom he brought the Gospel message.

In every town where he arrived for the first time, the Apostle began by getting in touch with the men of his own race. We have already seen that at this epoch the Roman Empire was sprinkled all over with Jewish colonies.[10] In nearly all cases these communities were situated in important centres where trade and industry had attracted the first settlers. Every Jewish traveller, whether or not he was furnished with letters of introduction, found a welcome among his brethren, who gave him hospitality, received him in their synagogue, and in case of a prolonged stay, exerted themselves to obtain work for him. The progress of Christianity, during its first expansion, was guided and facilitated by the ghettos of the Diaspora. It was the regular custom of Paul, as also of the other preachers of the Gospel, to address himself first of all to his former co-religionists, because he was of the same stock, of the same blood, and because he came to announce the fulfilment of the great hope of Israel. The synagogues of the Diaspora were veritable centres of monotheistic propaganda; there were to be met there not only the Jews but also those of the pagans who had some sympathy with Judaism, with its dogma or with its morality. By the side of the proselytes strictly so-called, who had been incor-

[8] 2 Thess. iii. 8. [9] Acts xx. 34.

[10] See above, p. 5.

porated in the Jewish race by circumcision, shared its faith and practised its worship, there were numerous pagans, men of high character, who were attracted in various degrees to Judaism, owing to its religious and moral superiority. The Jews showed themselves considerate to these men of good will and sincere piety, to whom they gave the name of "those who feared God" and of whom they hoped to make proselytes. The official of Candace of Ethiopia,[11] and the centurion Cornelius[12] belonged to this category of pagans whom the Jewish propaganda had reached and even won, but who, for one reason or another, remained outside Judaism.

The missionaries were in the habit of going to the synagogue on the Saturday which followed their arrival. In accordance with custom, they were invited, in their character of visitors, to speak some words of edification to those present.[13] At first the audience was interested and at the same time amazed; hostility did not begin or show itself till the first conversions; almost immediately it then became violent; the evangelists, driven from the synagogue, next turned to the pagans: this was the most fruitful field of propaganda, and the Christian community was formed mainly of converts from paganism. Such, with some variations, was the general line of Paul's evangelical work in Asia Minor, in Macedonia, in Achæa, and in Rome. In the majority of the cities where he preached the Gospel, his ministry was marked by incidents of this kind; nearly everywhere we find these three essential stages: preaching to the Jews in the synagogue, a hostile movement among the auditors, preaching to the

[11] Acts viii. 26-40. [12] Acts x. 1-43.
[13] Acts xiii. 14-16; xvi. 13; xvii. 2.

Gentiles. What did Paul preach? To quote his own expressions, he preached the message of salvation,[14] the word of God,[15] the Gospel of God,[16] the Gospel of Christ,[17] his own Gospel.[18] To the Jews he showed that the Messianic prophecies had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, and that this Jesus was the expected *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Lord*, bearing the same title as the God of the Patriarchs and of Moses. In the synagogues, his preaching was generally cast in the form of an argument supported by Scripture proofs, for prophecy was the great means of influence as regards the Jews.[19] To pagans he described the obscuration of religious truth and the corruption of conscience; he proved the Divinity of Christ, at once God and man; he taught the redeeming power of the sufferings and death of Jesus; he declared the necessity of repentance and of faith in Christ, this faith being the foundation of supernatural life and the condition of everlasting happiness. These very simple ideas were the core of his regular teaching. However, this was only the rudiments or starting-point; after baptism the converts received supplementary instruction about the Christian rite and the moral virtues which they must exercise.

In the *Acts* we only find three missionary discourses of St. Paul's: one delivered at Antioch in Pisidia, one at Lystra, and one at Athens.[20] The first was addressed to Jews, the two others to

[14] Acts xiii. 26; 2 Thess. ii. 16.
[15] Acts xiii. 46; 1 Thess. ii. 13.
[16] 1 Thess. ii. 2, 8, 9.
[17] 1 Thess. iii. 2; 2 Thess. i. 8; Gal. i. 7.
[18] 2 Thess. ii. 14; Gal. i. 8; Rom. ii. 16.
[19] Acts xiii. 16-41; cf. Acts ii. 16, 25; iii. 10, 21, 24.
[20] Acts xiii. 16-41; xiv. 15-17; xvii. 22-31.

pagans. They are evidently only summaries, and in order to get an idea of the Apostle's preaching, we must go to the epistles, which contain it on a larger scale, and give a faithful echo of it. Paul's sermons, if we are to judge from his letters, abounded in marks of originality, in bold expressions, in striking contrasts, more especially when he touched on the thought of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. All the strength of his faith flowed into his words on these occasions, as well as all the fervour of his love for his Master, and if there are written pages of his, the mere reading of which still moves us to-day, how great must have been the emotion of an audience when they heard with their own ears this man of vehement feeling, arresting presence, and soul-stirring utterance!

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Go, for unto the Gentiles afar off will I send thee.
(Acts xxii. 21.)

I. In Cyprus

It seems that the departure for the first journey must be dated in the summer of 44 or in the spring of 45. The apostolic party consisted of three persons: Barnabas, Paul, and Mark.[1] Barnabas was the leader. This title and honour belonged to him by right. He was one of the earliest converts; he had lived at Jerusalem in familiar intercourse with the Apostles; he had played an important part in the foundation and development of the church of Antioch; he had himself chosen Paul as his co-operator; when it became necessary to take to Jerusalem the alms of the Antiochene church, he had been appointed as head of the delegation.

Barnabas's idea was to evangelize Cyprus first of all, because it was his birthplace, and doubtless also because the island was easily accessible, for the distance from Seleucia to Salamis was only fifty leagues and numerous ships sailed between the two ports. The area of Cyprus is about the same as that of Corsica, and at this epoch the population, composed of Phœnicians, Greeks, and Jews, may

[1] Acts xiii. 4, 5.

have totalled half a million. Since 22 B.C. the island had been a senatorial province governed by a proconsul. According to Josephus, the Jewish communities there were prosperous. The Gospel had already been preached there by some of the Christians who had fled from Jerusalem at the time of the persecution which followed the martyrdom of Stephen.[2]

The little apostolic party traversed the island lengthways, that is, from east to west. The port of Salamis, on the east coast, was connected with that of Paphos, on the west coast, by a road, about a hundred and twenty miles in length, which ran through Citium, Amathus, and Curium. On their way the two evangelists preached the message of salvation in the synagogues. Nothing is said in *Acts* about the reception given to their words.[3]

At Paphos the Roman governor lived. His name was Sergius Paullus.[4] Judging from the office he held, he must have been a man of noble family. Being no doubt a sceptic in his attitude to the state religion, he took an interest in occult sciences and had in his suite a Jewish magician who had assumed the name of Elymas (the wise, the learned) but whose family surname was Barjesus (son of Jesus). The proconsul, on being informed of the arrival and preaching of the missionaries, expressed a desire to see and hear them. They hastened to accept Sergius Paullus's invitation. Barjesus, apprehensive of the disagreeable consequences to his

[2] Acts xi. 19, 20.

[3] Acts xiii. 5.

[4] The governorship of Sergius Paullus is attested by inscriptions. Moreover, Pliny, in his *Natural History* mentions a Sergius Paullus who must be the same as that of Acts.

own reputation which might result from interviews of this kind, used all his influence to frustrate the action of the preachers. His opposition was carried so far that Paul could not restrain his indignation: "O full of all guile and of all deceit!" he said to him, "child of the devil,[5] enemy of all justice, thou ceasest not to pervert the right ways of the Lord. And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." The magician's eyes were darkened instantly, and he must have a hand to guide his footsteps, like Paul on the road to Damascus. Amazed and confounded, the governor believed in the truth of the Gospel.[6] It is not stated in *Acts* that he received baptism; indeed it is more probable that he remained on the threshold of the faith, for his son and his grandson, who afterwards held important offices in the state, do not appear to have been Christians.

It does not appear that this mission in Cyprus was of long duration, for *Acts* says nothing of the foundation of any church in the island, and Paul makes no reference to it in his epistles; besides, the Apostle never returned to Cyprus, although he made it a rule to re-visit the churches which he had founded.

Moreover a new fact, very significant, and very important, is to be noted here: at the moment at which the missionaries leave Cyprus Paul ceases to be a subordinate; he passes to the first place, and assumes the direction of the party. Hitherto, in the account in *Acts*, St. Luke has put Barnabas's name

[5] The Aramaic for "child of the devil" was *Barsatan*. It was an ironical allusion to the name *Barjesus*. The name *Jesus* was common in the Jewish world.

[6] Acts xiii. 6-12.

first every time that Barnabas and Paul are associated in some joint work;[7] henceforth, Paul's name appears before that of his companion, and the apostolic party is called "they that were with Paul."[8] This re-arrangement of rôles is explained by the ascendancy of Paul over Barnabas. The latter gave up his position in favour of his fellow-worker as soon as he recognized his superiority; humbly and without bitterness he took the second place, leaving to his junior the initiative in the apostolate they had undertaken together. Perhaps we are to see in this change the reason why the missionaries abandoned so suddenly the evangelical work begun in Cyprus. Paul, it would appear, had bigger ideas than Barnabas; he longed for a wider field of action than this small island. Born in Cilicia he was naturally drawn towards Asia Minor. This part of the Asiatic continent was an immense reservoir of men, and for centuries its inhabitants had been reputed exceptionally religious.[9] Paul must have been impatient to bring the good news to them.

[7] Acts xi. 30; xii. 25; xiii. 2, 7.

[8] Acts xiii. 13, 50; xv. 2, 22, 35. We again find the order "Barnabas and Paul" in xiv. 14; xv. 12, 25. It is explicable in the first case by the pre-eminence of Jupiter over Mercury (see context) and in the second by the special respect given to Barnabas in the church of Jerusalem.

[9] Phrygia, especially, was the paradise of mysticism; the cults of Dionysus, of Cybele, and of Mithra, had either originated or been particularly developed there. Moreover, the temples of Pessinus, of Ephesus, of Cumana, of Tyana, of Hierapolis, of Pergamum, etc., served by great numbers of priests, were visited every year by thousands of pilgrims, many of whom came from distant places.

II. In Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia

The missionaries embarked at Paphos on a ship which was bound for Attalia (the present Adalia), a port situated at the mouth of the Cestros, on the coast of Pamphylia. From Attalia they went to Perga, a short stage, for only twelve miles separated the two towns. Although Perga was an important place they did not stop at it, Paul having determined to penetrate at once into the interior of Asia Minor and reach the capital of Pisidia. It was a bold and somewhat perilous plan. It involved passing over the Pisidian mountains, and crossing a region whose population was still in a semi-savage condition, before striking the great Roman road which ran from Troas and Ephesus to the Cilician Gates.

At Perga Mark refused to follow his companions any farther. Perhaps he was frightened at the prospect of such a journey in an inhospitable country. Perhaps too there existed between him and Paul some incompatibility of temperament from which he suffered secretly. It often happens that travelling together becomes a severe test of friendship, and that the most sincere affection does not always succeed in triumphing over certain antagonisms of character; we see men setting out good friends, journeying together for a few days, then separating half-way to their destination, and finally meeting again at the journey's end, glad to see one another once more. So Mark left the party and returned to Jerusalem, where he had left his mother.[10] This desertion must have been a disappointment for Barnabas, for the young man was united to him by

[10] Acts xii. 12, 13.

ties of close relationship, and they had formerly lived together in the Holy City. On Paul the separation left a strong and disagreeable impression, and, years afterwards, the memory of the incident led him to part from Barnabas, when Barnabas wished to choose Mark again as their companion.[11]

In order to reach Antioch in Pisidia from Perga, eight to ten weary days' journey had to be done. Antioch was founded by the Seleucids about 300 B.C. and had developed rapidly. The emperor Augustus had planted there a colony of veterans of the Fifth Gallic Legion. Situated in the heart of the high plateaux of Asia Minor, Antioch commanded all the great roads of the centre of the peninsula, and owing to its position had become one of the administrative headquarters since Pisidia and Lycaonia had been incorporated in the Roman province of Galatia. Jewish settlers had come there from the beginning, in the time of the Seleucids, in the same way as they had come to Iconium (the modern Konieh), another city lying on the Taurus road four stages farther on. These two Jewish colonies had long been centres of proselytism, and numerous pagans, won over to monotheism, attended the synagogues there.[12]

On the Saturday which followed their arrival at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue at the hour of public worship and quietly took their places at the end of the hall, near the door. The service in the synagogue on the sabbath day included prayers, the reading of the Law and the Prophets, with a translation of the same into the vulgar

[11] Acts xv. 35-39.
[12] Acts xiii. 16, 44, 50; xiv. 1, 2, 5.

tongue, an exhortation, and the concluding benediction. Anyone present, and especially any stranger, might be asked by the president of the meeting to address some words of edification to the congregation. On this occasion the two visitors were invited to do so. Paul rose and pronounced a discourse, the substance of which has been preserved by St. Luke.[13] He began by recalling God's favours to Israel; he then showed how the Divine promises had received their fulfilment in the person of Jesus, who was the descendant of David; finally he proved that Jesus, put to death by the Jewish authorities, was indeed the promised and expected Messias. It was just such an exposition of the Christian mystery as St. Peter had given in his discourse to the people of Jerusalem.[14] The curiosity of the hearers was thoroughly excited, and after listening attentively, they asked the missionaries to speak to them again at their next meeting. Jews and proselytes approached Paul and Barnabas as they were leaving the synagogue, in order to discuss the matter further with them, and these private conversations were repeated all through the week. In the ghetto and in pagan circles which were in touch with the Jews, nothing else was talked about, with the result that on the following Saturday the synagogue was crowded to overflowing. At the sight of the wave of interest and sympathy aroused by the evangelists, the leading men of the Jewish community, who represented the most orthodox element, had taken alarm at once, and they soon assumed a hostile attitude to the two missionaries: they believed that the most authentic privileges of Israel had been

[13] Acts xiii. 14-41.
[14] Acts ii. 14-36; iii. 12-26.

misunderstood by these strangers, who preached the message of salvation to Jews and Gentiles indiscriminately. The second meeting began with a debate which rapidly became stormy. Paul was prevented from making himself heard to the audience crowded together in the synagogue. Realizing the jealousy and animosity of the influential Jews, who had definitely determined to carry on systematic obstruction, he left the synagogue with Barnabas, but not before he had uttered his indignation in a loud voice: "To you it behoved us first to speak the word of God: but because you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn to the Gentiles." These words exasperated the majority of the Jewish hearers; on the other hand they were received with great joy by the pagans, among whom the preaching of Paul and Barnabas was completely successful.[15] It is probable that this failure among his own nation was a painful blow to Paul, and that he was confirmed by it in the belief that the Gospel must be offered primarily to the Gentiles.[16]

The missionaries spent long months at Antioch, which became a veritable centre of Christian propaganda. It is stated in *Acts* that "the word of the Lord was published throughout the whole country"[17]—a result which obviously could not be attained in a few weeks. Meanwhile the hostility of the Jews persisted, as bitter as ever, though concealed. Paul's enemies counted among their supporters, either as proselytes or as men who feared God, some citizens of note, and some women

[15] Acts xiii. 42-48.
[16] Acts ix. 15; xiii. 47; xxii. 15, 21; xxvi. 17, 18.
[17] Acts xiii. 49.

of high position. The Jews induced these to use their influence with the municipal authorities, and the officials, yielding to the pressure, at last issued an order of expulsion against the Apostles, under the pretext of disturbances occasioned by their action. Paul and Barnabas were banished, and had to leave Antioch in Pisidia. At their departure, they shook the dust from their feet against the city:[18] it was the application of a Gospel precept.[19]

After four or five days' journey eastwards, they reached Iconium, a city attached for administrative purposes to Lycaonia (Lycaonia itself being part of the province of Galatia), and quite recently raised by the emperor Claudius to the rank of a Roman colony. They preached first of all in the synagogue, as they had done at Antioch. Many Jews embraced the faith of Christ, but the conversions were more numerous among the pagans. Once more Paul and Barnabas had to suffer from the opposition of those among their brethren who remained unbelievers. These latter succeeded in raising a part of the population in a riot against the missionaries. The city became divided into two camps, one side declaring for the Apostles, the other for the Jews. Finally the quarrel passed from abuse to blows. There was even some talk of stoning the two strangers. As the situation had become an untenable one for these latter, they decided to continue their travels. When they left Iconium,[20] after a prolonged

[18] Acts xiii. 50-52.

[19] Cf. Matt. x. 14; Mark vii. 11; Luke ix. 5; x. 11; Acts xviii. 6.

[20] It is Iconium that is connected with the touching legend of Paul and Thecla, related in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla,* an apocryphal work of the second half of the second century.

stay, the Christian community there was numerous and strongly organized.[21]

They next stopped at Lystra in Lycaonia, twenty-five miles south of Iconium. It was a city of no great importance, where Augustus had established a colony of veterans fifty years earlier, and where the Roman element was preponderant, if not in numbers, at least in influence. As for Jews, there is nothing in the account to indicate their presence in this town; however, there did exist a small group of them, with which was connected the family of Timothy, of whom we shall hear later.[22] Paul and Barnabas preached the Gospel in Lystra and in the surrounding villages. One day when Paul was speaking in public, at Lystra itself, he noticed in the audience a poor man, a cripple deprived of the use of his legs from birth, who was listening attentively. Paul fixed his eyes on him and bade him in a loud voice stand up on his feet. The other obeyed; he rose and began to walk before the eyes of the stupefied audience. The witnesses of this miracle at once concluded that the two missionaries were gods who had assumed human form in order to visit mortals. This idea, so astonishing to us, was no doubt suggested by the memory of an old local legend, according to which two of the immortals, Jupiter and Mercury, had once travelled in that region and had received the hospitality of Philemon and Baucis. In Barnabas, who was taller than Paul, they recognized Jupiter, while his companion was identified with Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. At once the news of the presence of divine guests passed from mouth to mouth and spread all over the town. Just outside the town

[21] Acts xiv. 1-6. [22] Acts xvi. 1-3.

walls, close to one of the gates, there was actually a temple dedicated to Jupiter, where the service of the god was in the hands of a priest. The minister of this sanctuary was no sooner informed of the arrival of his god than he brought bulls adorned with garlands to offer him a sacrifice. At this moment Paul and Barnabas came on the scene. When they saw the flower-crowned victims, they understood the priest's intention, and full of anger, they tore their garments, protesting against the mistake of which they were the subject. It took them some time to convince those present, and to dispel the enthusiasm of their admirers.[23]

The Apostles spent a long time in peace at Lystra, and were able to preach in complete freedom. It was in this town that Paul met one who was destined afterwards to be his dearly loved disciple, his spiritual son, Timothy. At this period, he was only a youth. The son of a pagan father and a Jewish mother, he had not been circumcised. He grew up under the loving and watchful eyes of his grandmother Lois and of his mother Eunice. His father was probably dead by this time. Paul converted the two women and directed them to instruct Timothy in the Christian faith.[24]

In the meantime the Jews of Antioch and Iconium had received news of the success of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. This was enough to revive their hostility. They sent emissaries into the town where the missionaries were working. These men set to work in such a fashion that they succeeded in totally changing the attitude of a section of the population. When they thought the ground

[23] Acts xiv. 7-18.
[24] Acts xvi. 1-3; 2 Tim. i. 5.

sufficiently prepared, and the moment favourable, they stirred up a movement against Paul and his companion which degenerated into a riot. Some of the mob succeeded in seizing Paul, who was half murdered by the stones thrown at him, and left for dead outside the town where he had been dragged. Fortunately some friends came to his assistance, brought him back to consciousness, and helped him to the house where he lived. Next day, with a bruised body and a heavy heart, Paul departed for Derbe with Barnabas.[25]

Derbe was the most easterly point reached by the missionaries in the course of this first journey. There also their labours were fruitful, and a church was founded, composed exclusively of converts from paganism. No incident marked the evangelization of this little town, situated two days' journey from Lystra.[26]

Three or four years had elapsed since Paul and Barnabas had sailed from Seleucia. The idea came to them to revisit their brethren at Antioch. From Derbe they could have returned directly to the capital of Syria by following the great road which crossed the Taurus by the defile of the Cilician Gates: it was the shortest route. But Paul wished to touch at the different churches he had founded, both in order to consolidate his work, and to assure himself of the fidelity of the new converts. He therefore resolved to retrace in the opposite direction the way he had followed from Attalia to Derbe. For the second time the missionaries visited Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia. They again spent some time in each of these cities where peace had gradually been restored after their

[25] Acts xiv. 19, 20. [26] Acts xiv. 20.

departure. They strengthened the courage of the converts, urged them to persevere in the faith, and reminded them of the necessity of enduring a thousand trials in order to enter into the kingdom of God. Further, they organized each church on the model of the communities at Jerusalem and at Antioch in Syria, by establishing a council of elders, official custodians and recognized representatives of the authority of the Apostles. Everywhere there were touching farewells when the hour of parting came: those who were going commended to God the believers whom they had begotten to the faith in the midst of such tribulations; those who remained behind promised to live in the love of Christ.[27]

From Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas travelled down to Perga, and this time stayed a while there to preach the Gospel. Afterwards they reached the port of Attalia, from which they took passage to Seleucia. They were back at Antioch on the Orontes in the course of 48 or 49, once more surrounded by their brethren whose prayers had constantly accompanied them during their long absence.[28]

After their arrival it was necessary to give a detailed account of the work which they had accomplished in the midst of the Gentiles. Certainly the results of this first journey were encouraging and warranted the vastest hopes for the future. A nucleus of Christians had been formed at Salamis and at Paphos in Cyprus. Five churches had been founded in Asia Minor, at Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and Perga. These communities were fervent and growing. Everywhere the pagans had received the Gospel readily, almost

[27] Acts xiv. 21-23. [28] Acts xiv. 24-26.

greedily. Those who for ages had dwelt " sitting in darkness and the shadow of death " had been illuminated by the light from above. Conversions had multiplied along the path of the missionaries. As they listened to the story of these marvels, the faithful felt their hearts fill with joy and gave thanks to God who had opened wide to the Gentiles the " door of faith." [29]

Paul and Barnabas remained some months with their brethren at Antioch the Great.[30]

[29] Acts xiv. 27.
[30] Acts xiv. 28.

CHAPTER VII

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERTY

Be not held again under the yoke of bondage. (Gal. v. 1.)

I. The Question of Circumcision

In order to grasp fully the meaning and the importance of the conflict which arose at this epoch in the bosom of the Church, and which might have had disastrous consequences for the expansion of Christianity, we must form a clear idea of the respective positions held by the believers of Jewish origin and the believers of Gentile origin in reference to the Mosaic Law. It was precisely on the question of the force of the Law and its obligatory character that the quarrel arose and the battle was fought between the defenders of two opposing tendencies.

The crisis, however, was inevitable, for it was involved, on the one hand, in the very nature of the evangelical work undertaken outside Palestine by the men who had presented the message of salvation to the pagans, and, on the other hand, in the actual situation produced by the juxtaposition, in numerous communities, of elements of different origin.

In his ministry Jesus had only addressed himself to the children of Israel.[1] In his preaching he had

[1] Matt. xv. 24, 26.

said that he had come to complete and consummate the ancient Law, not to destroy or abrogate it.[2] After his death, the Apostles had remained faithful to the external observances of Jewish piety, a circumstance to which they owed the sympathy of many persons in the orthodox society of Jerusalem.[3] The church at Jerusalem had been born in the shadow of the Temple and had grown in the same conditions; the Jews who composed it were Jews in the true and strict sense, whether they came of Palestinian Judaism or of Hellenic Judaism, and all professed the same veneration for the Law as their ancestors had done. The first Christian believers remained steeped in the traditional Jewish spirit; what the devout men of their nation believed and practised, that they believed and practised; they continued to obey the Mosaic regulations which since their infancy had made up the external framework of their religious life; they did not, of course, any longer look for the coming of the Messias, because for them he had already come, but their faith in Christ Jesus did not in the least diminish their devotion to the Law; in their eyes, Israel according to the flesh was still the heir and first beneficiary of the Divine promises; in their opinion the kingdom of God preached by Jesus belonged by right to the people of the Covenant.

When, owing to the pressure of circumstances, the basis of the church of Jerusalem was widened, the Gospel was preached to the Samaritans; but the Samaritans practised circumcision and recognized the authority of the Law; and since, moreover, they were connected after a fashion with the seed of Abraham, it might be held that the new faith was

[2] Matt. v. 17; Luke xvi. 17. [3] Acts ii. 47; iv. 33.

not overstepping the limits of the ancient Jewish kingdom. The admission of Cornelius the centurion into the Church was not accomplished without some difficulty; we have seen that Peter had to justify his action to the faithful at Jerusalem, and that he only did so by pleading an express command from Heaven. The history of this event in *Acts*[4] sheds a strong light on the religious scruples entertained by the pious Jew in reference to the uncircumcised. As God had clearly revealed his will, the church at Jerusalem could offer no opposition, and ended by giving expression to its joy, glorifying the Lord for having "also to the Gentiles given repentance until life." [5] Their gratitude was assuredly sincere, but the wall that separated the Jews from the pagans (from "the sinners," according to the current expression) still remained standing, and the breach through which Cornelius had entered, ought, in the opinion of many, to be closed as soon as possible. The exclusiveness and particularism of the majority of the Jerusalem Christians had neither diminished nor changed.

Meanwhile, outside Palestine, a new movement had been started just after the dispersion which followed the death of Stephen, and was progressing rapidly. Enthusiastic believers had carried the good news to Phœnicia, to Syria, and as far as Cyprus. Some of these evangelists had even offered the Gospel message to Gentiles at Antioch, and while at Jerusalem the Christian propaganda met with such opposition from the Jewish authorities as to be almost paralysed, a church came into existence in the Syrian metropolis in which recruits of Gentile origin formed the strongest element.

[4] Acts x. 1; xi. 18. [5] Acts xi. 18.

On hearing this news, the members of the mother-church had been surprised and a little alarmed; this influx of Gentiles created a new and unforeseen situation, which must be regularized. Barnabas had been officially commissioned to arrange matters. When he came to Antioch, he had looked with nothing but favour on this movement for making converts in the pagan world, and almost at once the centre of Christian activity had shifted from the capital of the Jewish world to the capital of Syria, which became the true home of the Christian apostolate.

While Paul and Barnabas were evangelizing Cyprus and founding Christian communities in Asia Minor, in the course of their first journey, the church at Jerusalem which had suffered seriously from the persecution of Herod Agrippa, showed no sign of any activity outside its own limits, but concentrated all its efforts on the exercise of the Christian virtues within the traditional frontiers of Jewish piety. In Palestine, the preaching of the Apostles found itself more and more strongly resisted by the popular feeling. Some progress had, it is true, been made here and there, more especially at Lydda, Joppa, Cæsarea on the coast, Azotus, and also in Samaria. Nevertheless the early dream of incorporating the great mass of the Palestinian Jews in the religion of Christ now seemed fantastic.

As for new converts (who were always of the Jewish race) they passed from Judaism to Christianity without retracting any of their previous beliefs. All these continued to live, as their ancestors had done, in the observance of the Law, without giving up anything which they had been used to regard

as of religious obligation. On one point only their creed was enlarged, at the moment when they recognized in Jesus of Nazareth the Messias and Saviour of the Jewish nation. For them the Messianic hope was in fact realized, and this belief formed the only peculiar characteristic of the adherents of the new faith in its Palestinian environment. At Jerusalem, as throughout Palestine, a man still remained a Jew when he became a Christian.

Things wore quite a different aspect in Syria, Cilicia, and Asia Minor. In the mixed churches founded by Paul, Barnabas, and other missionaries of the Greek-speaking group, Judaism was, as it were, swallowed up in the religion of Christ, to which Jews and Gentiles participated indiscriminately, although in differing proportions, the Gentiles being easily first in point of numbers. In order to belong to the Christian community, it was only necessary to receive baptism, which was the symbol of faith in Jesus (in whose name it was administered), and the sign of the repentance which was required from every catechumen. The Jews of the Dispersion, in spite of their devotion to the Law, and to the traditional observances, did not feel the same extreme loathing for all that was pagan as their brethren of Palestine did. Paul's influence was sufficiently great to secure that in the churches founded by him the believers of Jewish origin should associate with the rest, especially in the liturgical meetings, at which the common meal was the sign of unity, and at which the celebration of the Eucharist, the memorial of the death and sacrifice of Jesus, united all the believers in one and the same symbolic act. Paul and Barnabas had never required that their converts from paganism

should be circumcised; according to their view, the Gentiles became full members of the religion of Jesus by faith in Christ, and by baptism; they knew besides that nearly all their converts would have felt a repugnance for becoming Jews before they became Christians. While the faithful in the church at Jerusalem continued to live after the manner of Jews, Christianity had in Asia Minor and Syria assumed from the beginning the aspect of a religion distinct from Judaism, independent, autonomous.

When the believers of Jerusalem knew that pagans were entering the Church in numbers, without previously undergoing the rite of circumcision, without being compelled to observe the Law, and that in the communities founded outside Palestine Jews and Greeks lived side by side on a footing of complete equality, many of them were gravely scandalized. In their eyes such practices amounted to a veritable rebellion against that which they had been taught to revere and guard faithfully. Some years before, Barnabas had been commissioned by the mother-church to control and direct the development of the Christian community at Antioch; this measure had then been sufficient to calm their apprehensions. But now they had to deal, not with isolated cases, but with a general movement, and what had originally been a barely tolerated exception threatened to become the universal rule. Thus dissatisfaction broke out afresh, and assumed a violent character. Some of those who formed the rigorist and intransigent party at Jerusalem, the so-called Judaizers, set out for Antioch.

The Christians of the great city were full of joy at the results obtained by Paul and Barnabas in

their first missionary journey, when these men from Jerusalem arrived, strongly prejudiced against the two Apostles and especially bitter against Paul. The new arrivals dispersed themselves among the faithful at Antioch, and set to work to vindicate boldly the neglected claims of Judaism, with which, according to them, salvation was for ever bound up: "Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved," they told the converted pagans.[6] Without going so far as to deny the call of the Gentiles to the faith, they declared that faith in Jesus could not of itself secure salvation, and they demanded that all the catechumens should be made subject to the precepts of the Law, above all to that of circumcision, which was the stamp of the Law on the flesh of its subjects, and the external sign of enrolment in the people of God.

Paul and Barnabas were at once up in arms against such pretensions, which would strike such a serious blow at the expansion of Christianity in pagan quarters, which implied a condemnation of the method of evangelization practised by them, and which, above all, endangered the very foundation of the Christian dispensation. The two missionaries saw clearly that to insist on the necessity of circumcision was to renounce all hope of gaining the pagan world, and that to make this rite an indispensable condition of salvation was to deny the intrinsic value of the redeeming act of Christ. Both as regards missionary work and as regards the faith, the thesis of the Judaizers seemed to them to be the ruin of Christianity. They therefore resisted with all their might. But even so, they did not succeed in silencing these persons who

[6] Acts xv. 1.

had come from Jerusalem, and who made a certain impression and converted to their ideas some members of the Antiochene church. There arose a state of doubt and division.

It was of supreme importance, not only for the faithful at Antioch, but for all believers, that the question of principle should be settled once for all. Hence it was decided that the problem should be sent to the tribunal of the Apostles, to be cleared up and determined by them: it was the only way to obtain complete light on the subject, and to put an end to the conflict. Paul and Barnabas were delegated by their brethren of Antioch to go to Jerusalem, together with some others, among whom was Titus, a young man recently converted from paganism: they were to defend the case of the Gentiles before the rulers of the mother-church.[7]

II. The Meeting at Jerusalem

The time was probably the autumn of 49, perhaps the spring of 50. The delegates of the church of Antioch took the overland route through Phœnicia and Samaria.[8] On the way they were received and

[7] Acts xv. 2; Gal. ii. 1.

[8] The account in Acts xv. 1-29 refers to the same journey as St. Paul speaks of in the Epistle to the Galatians, ii. 1-10. In spite of some divergences in detail, there is a substantial agreement between the two texts: the cause of the journey is the same, the persons that appear are the same, the issue of the debate is the same. The divergences arise from the fact that the two accounts are independent of one another, and above all from their having been written with different objects: St. Luke records the journey as an historian, neglecting certain

entertained by the Christian communities. They related what God had done for the pagans, and how these latter had responded to their call. There was rejoicing everywhere at the news of such encouraging conversions.[9] In the Holy City Paul and Barnabas received the warmest welcome from the Apostles and Ancients. They had private conversations with Peter, James, and John, the foremost members of the community, to whom they stated the precise object of their mission, asking them to decide the point of dispute raised by certain Judaizers, and to dispel all doubts by settling the question of circumcision. In the presence of the assembled brethren they described their apostolate among the Gentiles.[10]

Meanwhile the Judaizers at Jerusalem, once members of the sect of the Pharisees,[11] became alarmed, and began to work busily in order to frustrate Paul's designs. Knowing the deep devotion of the believers at Jerusalem to the Mosaic Law, they endeavoured to produce a reaction of opinion in favour of rigorism, hoping that the leaders of the church would be influenced thereby and would not pronounce for the opposite view. Hearing that Paul had brought with him a converted pagan, Titus, they demanded that he should be circumcised.[12]

features of the struggle in order to go straight to the principal fact, i.e., the settlement with its results of a general character; St. Paul, on the other hand, in his letter is dealing with a purely personal question, for he has to reply to the calumnies of the Judaizers, and in his defence he emphasizes the more private details which in his opinion form the proofs of his claim.

[9] Acts xv. 3.
[10] Acts xv. 4.
[11] Acts xv. 5.
[12] Gal. ii. 3.

The Apostles had at once recognized Paul's title to Apostolic rank, and the expediency of the method used by him in the evangelization of the Gentiles; as a sign of perfect agreement and brotherly union, they had given him their hands, and to Barnabas as well; further, it was recognized among them that the task of the conversion of the pagans was specially entrusted to Paul and to Barnabas, while the other Apostles were to occupy themselves with the Jews.[13] But the Judaizers redoubled their intrigues, tried to influence the relations of Paul with the leading Apostles, and demanded the circumcision of Titus. Paul had no choice but to refuse any concession on a point which to his eyes symbolized the very principle of liberty or of servitude,[14] and showed himself determined not to give way. Various signs incline us to think that Peter and the other "pillars of the Church" would have preferred a compromise in this particular case, but in the end they were conquered by Paul's arguments and came over to his way of thinking.[15]

The parties could not separate without making a decision and promulgating it formally, in order to put an end to the quarrel, for there was no other way to calm men's minds, to instruct their understandings, and to maintain intact the unity of doctrine and of discipline. It is true Paul had already won the Gentiles' case before the tribunal of the Apostles, but it was necessary that the opposite party, in this case the Judaizers—those whom the Epistle to the Galatians qualifies as false brethren, intruders, spies of Christian liberty—

[13] Gal. ii. 7-10.
[14] Gal. ii. 4.
[15] Gal. ii. 5, 6.

should be induced by a public award to recognize the unjust character of their claims and demands. The Apostles, the Elders, and the faithful, therefore met in solemn assembly. This assembly usually goes by the name of the Council of Jerusalem, although there was no idea of a council in the strict sense. A discussion began in which the champions of the opposing doctrines came to grips with one another.[16] After both sides had set forth their principles and their arguments, Peter rose. He declared himself definitely in favour of liberty for the Gentiles, and asserted the absolute equality of circumcised and uncircumcised in their relation to the Gospel.[17] The auditors were profoundly impressed, and no protest was raised when Paul and Barnabas, in their turn, once more related the miracles and portents which God had worked by their hands among the pagans.[18] When they had finished, James addressed the assembly. His speech shows a firm fidelity to the Law, together with a strong desire for agreement. Passing over the question of the Jews, he examines only the case of the Gentiles, and offers a practical solution in accordance with the principle upheld by Paul. In his opinion, the admission of pagans into the Church is lawful; moreover, circumcision could not be imposed on them: "I judge," he said, "that they who from among the Gentiles are converted to God are not to be disquieted." The liberty they claim is therefore granted to them; at the same time, the feelings of the Jews ought to be respected, and for this reason it is advisable to avoid certain practices

[16] Acts xv. 6, 7.
[17] Acts xv. 7-11.
[18] Acts xv. 12.

which are a direct offence to them; therefore the Gentiles must abstain from meat that has been sacrificed to idols, from fornication, from the meat of animals that have been strangled, and from blood.[19]

The words of James, who was known in the whole of Jerusalem for his loyalty to the traditions of the fathers, and honoured by the Judaizers themselves, had a decisive effect. The entire assembly adopted his view. It was decided to send to the faithful in Syria and Cilicia messengers who would communicate to them the will of the Apostles. Judas Barsabbas and Silas were appointed for this purpose, and a letter known as the "Apostolic decree" was given to these delegates. This official document explicitly censured the emissaries of the Judaizers, who, without any authorization, had gone to sow division in the church at Antioch; it gave unqualified praise to the work of Paul and Barnabas; it definitely established the principle of liberty for the Gentiles converted to the faith of Christ, and enumerated the obligations which were imposed upon them.[20] The case was won for the uncircumcised, and, thanks to the positive injunctions of the decree, peace and harmony seemed assured.

Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch in company with Judas and Silas. The latter informed the faithful of the decisions arrived at by the assembly at Jerusalem, and remained some time among them, speaking at their meetings for their instruction and edification. After this Judas returned to the Holy City, while Silas remained in the Syrian capital.[21]

[19] Acts xv. 13-21.
[20] Acts xv. 22-29.
[21] Acts xv. 30-34, 40.

The Antiochene community had regained tranquillity and the quarrel seemed definitely settled.

III. The Incident at Antioch

The struggle was, however, destined to break out afresh some months later, under a new form. The converted Jews of strict observance had always shrunk from the slightest contact with pagans, and the Jews of this class at Jerusalem would have thought themselves defiled by eating with uncircumcised men; in their view, the food restrictions imposed on the Gentiles by the decree did not justify a pious Jew in disregarding a positive command of Tradition.

In the Holy City, where the Jewish Christian lived among men of the same race and the same feelings, where the Church contained only believers of Jewish origin, no difficulty could arise on this score. It was quite different in the mixed communities. The principle of separation, if applied, led immediately to fatal consequences from the point of view of Christian brotherhood, for the Eucharistic meal, with its united commemoration of the Lord's death, was an indispensable religious act. Paul, who held that everything which was an obstacle to charity and unity had now been abolished, had never felt any scruples about eating with the Gentile converts. At Antioch he lived as he had done in Asia Minor; Barnabas copied him, and the majority of the faithful followed their example, with the result that there was free intercourse between the two elements, the Jewish and the pagan.

When Peter came to the Syrian capital, Paul prevailed on him to mix with the uncircumcised Christians as much as with the others, and to take part in the religious meals. Moreover, in acting in this way Peter was consistent with himself, for he had asserted the principle of the complete equality of all believers in the new faith. The attitude of the leader of the Apostles was not an indifferent matter, for it would necessarily influence the converted Jews. Peter was therefore frequently in the company of Gentiles of the church of Antioch, when some persons arrived from Jerusalem, sent by James, or so they said. The newcomers declared themselves scandalized by Peter's conduct, and their remonstrances had the result of changing his habits if not his opinions. The Prince of the Apostles no longer sat at the same table as the uncircumcised Christians, and to all practical purposes broke off all relations with them as if their contact were bound to contaminate him. This sudden change produced a sensation in the community. Jewish converts imitated Peter, and Barnabas himself was carried away by the almost general movement. With the Gentile believers there remained only Paul. He stood firm, and in the face of the danger which threatened the church of Antioch, he decided to take an extreme step.

By his changed attitude towards the Gentiles, Peter was morally compelling them to "Judaize." They found themselves, in fact, under an obligation to live in the Jewish manner, and to obey the Law of Moses in all points unless they wished to be deprived of the society of the man who, since the Resurrection, held the first place in the Church. It is true Peter had said nothing of this sort, and

this conclusion was even contrary to his personal opinions, for otherwise he would have gone against his conscience in mixing with the Gentiles; but his present conduct did logically lead to this conclusion. By yielding to the clamours of a section, Peter had betrayed great weakness.

In the course of one of these religious meetings where brotherly unity no longer existed, and the faithful were split into two portions, Paul struck a great blow. Without circumlocution or diplomacy, he reproached Peter for his unsteadiness in the application of a principle which he had recognized and proclaimed as right: "If thou, being a Jew," he said, "livest after the manner of the Gentiles, not as the Jews do, how dost thou compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews"—a reference to the moral constraint exercised by Peter's recent conduct. To this vehement apostrophe, Paul added various considerations to show that Christians were not to look for justice in the observation of the Law, but in faith in Christ and there only.[22]

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul does not tell us what the issue of the incident was; he had no occasion to do so. However, we cannot doubt the success of this intervention. Peter had been weak and inconsistent, but he had acted in good faith. When he had realized the serious objections which might be made to his recent attitude, he did not persist in it. Of course, he was keenly desirous not to alienate one side by complying with the wishes of the other, but at bottom, he had the same principles as Paul, and he was too honest to persevere in a course which had been clearly proved to him to be illogical and dangerous. All that we know of the

[22] Gal. ii. 14-21.

rest of his life shows his perfect agreement with the Apostle of the Gentiles. The incident had been violent and unpleasant; it had at least the happy result of liberating the church of Antioch from the influence of the Judaizers. They kept quiet or dropped into the background, in the full determination to resume the struggle against Paul on the first opportunity. Beaten at one point, they did not despair of getting their revenge at another.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

In journeyings often. (2 Cor. xi. 26.)

About the time when the Gospel was carried to Italy by missionaries whose names have not been preserved by history, and a Christian community was founded at Rome itself, Paul thought of re-visiting his beloved converts in Asia Minor, and of extending even farther the field of his conquests. He communicated his plan to Barnabas, who had been his companion during the first mission. Barnabas received the idea favourably, but said that he was anxious to take with him his young cousin, Mark. This became a source of disagreement between the two missionaries. Paul could not forgive Mark for his desertion and would not for any consideration take with him a man whose courage had formerly failed him. Barnabas proved inflexible in his choice of his companion, and Paul refused to make any concession. The dispute became warm, and the long friendship which bound these two men of strong feelings to one another, was not able to survive a difference of opinion about a person. They parted therefore, although retaining respect as well as sympathy for one another, and each proceeded to labour in his own way for the common object. Barnabas took Mark with him, reached the port of

Seleucia, and embarked for Cyprus.[1] Paul turned to Silas, who had come to Antioch some months previously as one of the delegates of the Apostles, and proposed that he should take Barnabas's place. Silas was fascinated by the prospect of a far-reaching mission among the Gentiles, and accepted the proposal.[2]

I. In Asia Minor

In the spring of 51 the two missionaries left their brethren of Antioch, after having been commended by them to the grace of God, and set out for Asia Minor by land. They crossed the Amanus range by the pass of the Syrian Gates, and reached the Taurus. On their way they strengthened and encouraged the communities previously founded in Northern Syria and in Cilicia.[3] In Lycaonia, Paul made a stay at Derbe and at Lystra. To his great joy he learnt that the faithful had lost nothing of their first fervour, and that the centres of Christianity founded by him had appreciably developed. At Lystra he again met the young man Timothy, whose religious instruction had been completed by his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois. Wishing to take him with him, Paul circumcised him in order to avoid giving offence to the Jews whom he would meet on his journey.

At first glance this action may seem in contradiction with Paul's principles; nevertheless, it was justified. As Timothy was the son of a Jewish mother, his Jewish compatriots would certainly have raised objections to him unless he had been

[1] Acts xv. 35-39.
[2] Acts xv. 40.
[3] Acts xv. 41.

circumcised, and for the same reason Paul's ministry among his own race would have been rendered more difficult. Besides, in the Apostle's eyes circumcision was in itself a matter of indifference, and the first principle of his mission bade him become all things to all men, a Jew to the Jews, a Gentile to the Gentiles, in order to win souls for Christ.[4] In the case of Titus, who had been born a pagan, he had shown himself unyielding, because the smallest concession then would have compromised the success of the cause whose advocate he was, but in Timothy's case the principle of the freedom of the Gentiles was not involved. By circumcising the young convert, and conforming to a custom the violation of which would have been prejudicial to his ministry, Paul proved his broad-mindedness and prudence. As for Timothy, he was destined to fulfil completely the hopes placed in him. Paul found in him a faithful and devoted helper, and he afterwards wrote to the Philippians that of all his disciples none shared his own views so fully as Timothy did.[5] From Lystra Paul went to Iconium, then to Antioch in Pisidia, thus realizing the desire which had brought him back to this region, for the first object which he aimed at in this second journey was to visit the communities organized by himself and Barnabas in the course of the previous journey.[6]

Having accomplished this task, he resolved to carry the Gospel to a new country, and turned his eyes towards the province of Asia,[7] the population

[4] 1 Cor. ix. 19-23.
[5] Phil. 19-22.
[6] Acts xvi. 1-5.
[7] The senatorial province of Asia did not embrace the whole of Asia Minor; it included only the western portion of the peninsula, that is, Mysia, Lydia, Caria and Phrygia.

of which had been deeply penetrated by Greco-Roman civilization, and in which large cities were numerous.[8] But the Holy Ghost made him change his direction at least, if not his plan itself, and instead of going to the west of the peninsula, Paul took his way towards the north.

He thus came to the "Galatian land."[9] The expression used by St. Luke denotes Galatia properly so called, that is, the region which lies to the north of Pisidia and Lycaonia, and in which, in 278 B.C. emigrants of Celtic race had settled.[10] There were no Jewish colonies in this region, which was difficult of access and somewhat rugged in character. Paul and his companions therefore addressed themselves directly and immediately to the pagans. The Galatians were simple folk, honest and inquisitive. They welcomed the missionaries. Without fear of giving scandal to anybody, Paul preached to them Jesus crucified. This doctrine

[8] Ephesus was the capital and the residence of the pro-consul. Other important centres that may be named are: Smyrna, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossæ, Miletus, Pergamum, Sardis, Philadelphia.

[9] Acts xvi. 6: "They passed through Phrygia and the Galatian country," or perhaps, "the Phrygian and Galatian country." There has been much controversy about the route followed by Paul. Was it South Galatia or North Galatia? Fr. M.-J. Lagrange has dealt with the question in his commentary on the *Epistle to the Galatians*, Paris, 1918, pp. xiii-xxvii. See also E. Jacquier, *Les Actes des Apôtres*, Paris, 1926, pp. 478-480.

[10] Ancyra (now Angora) was the capital of the country of the Galatians, Tavium and Pessinus the other chief towns. The Galatian kingdom was for a long time under the protectorate of Rome, with the title of an ally; it did not become a Roman province till 25 B.C., at the death of Amyntas. It is more probable that Paul did not go beyond the neighbourhood of Pessinus when he evangelized Galatia strictly so called.

made such an impression on them that many of them asked for baptism. The sincerity and simplicity of their faith delighted the Apostle. He fell ill while he was among his Galatian converts and had to prolong his stay beyond what he had intended.[11] The new believers showed him such a tender affection on this occasion, and lavished so many thoughtful attentions on him, that at a later period it was a pleasure to him to remind them of these signs of friendship.[12] Paul experienced nothing but satisfaction and consolation from their society. In spite of his physical sufferings he then met with joys which perhaps he had never before tasted, and which he was never to know again.

As soon as his health permitted, Paul resumed his journey towards new countries. After making a vain attempt to enter Bithynia, he passed through Mysia from east to west, and arrived at Troas on the Ægean Sea, close to the site of ancient Troy. Having come so far, he had no very clear idea where to go next, when a dream settled his doubts. One night he dreamt that he saw a Macedonian who entreated him to cross to Macedonia, and to help his fellow-countrymen. He interpreted the vision as a revelation of the Divine will, and hastened to find a vessel sailing for the coast of Europe.[13]

Since his departure from Antioch in Syria he had already travelled four or five hundred leagues.

II. In Macedonia

It was at this point that Luke, an Antiochene by

[11] On the nature of this illness, see above, p. 29.
[12] Gal. iv. 13-15.
[13] Acts xvi. 7-10.

birth, joined Paul, for now the "we" appears for the first time in the text of *Acts*.[14] Born of pagan parents, Luke belonged to the original group of converts. He was a man of acute, sober, and cultivated intellect, of gentle and kindly disposition, of sensitive feelings and of sincere and humble character. In him Paul was to find not only a willing fellow-worker, but above all a friend and confidant. Fascinated by the Gospel ideal, he had grasped all its nobility and all its beauty. It is not surprising that he should have been devoted to the man in whom the spirit of Christ still lived. To the end of his life he lived under the spell of the Apostle.

Paul and his companions therefore embarked at Troas. On the evening of the same day, sailing before the wind, the vessel touched at Samothrace, and on the next day the little apostolic party landed at Neapolis (the modern Cavalla), in Macedonia. Without spending any time in this maritime city, the missionaries set out on the Via Egnatia. This was the great Roman road which traversed Macedonia and Thrace from Neapolis to Dyrrhachium (the modern Durazzo), and running through Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Pella, connected the Ægean with the Adriatic. The senatorial province of Macedonia, which Paul now entered for the first time, comprised four districts and was governed by a proconsul, who resided at Thessalonica (now Salonika).

Nine or ten miles inland, to the north-west of Neapolis, lay Philippi. It was at this time an important city, and a good deal Latinized. It owed its fame to the double battle in which the armies

[14] Acts xvi. 10.

of Brutus and Cassius had been destroyed by those of Octavius and Antony in 42 B.C. Some years later Augustus had established there a Roman colony with the Italic franchise, and throughout his reign he had shown himself particularly gracious to the city at whose gates fortune had declared for his cause. The bulk of the inhabitants of Philippi were of Macedonian race, a race renowned for hard work and somewhat rough honesty. The Jews were not numerous there, and had no synagogue in the town; they held their meetings in an oratory built outside the city near a little brook whose clean waters were suitable for their ceremonial ablutions.

The missionaries waited for the sabbath day in order to attend this Jewish chapel. They found there some pious women belonging to the class of those "who feared God," and preached to them the mystery of Jesus, Messias and Saviour. One of them was immediately converted to the Christian faith; she received baptism with all her household, and pressed the Apostles so earnestly to take up their quarters in her house, that Paul complied. This woman had come from Thyatira in Lydia, and at Philippi she followed the lucrative trade of a vendor of purple cloth; the name of Lydia, i.e. "the Lydian woman," had no doubt been given to her on account of her native country.

Paul remained at Philippi some weeks, going regularly to the chapel to preach the Gospel. One day while he was going there with Silas, a young slave-girl, who was a ventriloquist, and told fortunes, greatly to the profit of her masters, began to follow them, crying out aloud: "These men are the messengers of the Most High God, who come to preach the way of salvation." The poor girl did

this on several days in succession, till Paul, tired of her cries, exorcised her, and released her from the evil spirit which possessed her.

This led to an incident which occasioned the departure of the two missionaries. The owners of the slave, finding that they had lost a source of gain, laid hands on Paul and Silas, dragged them to the agora, and accused them before the magistrates of causing disorder in the city. "These people," they said, "preach customs which it is not lawful for us, being Romans, to accept or to practise." The crowd for its own part showed signs of hostility to the prisoners. The magistrates, without even a regular examination, ordered the lictors to inflict a flogging on these two vagabond Jews who had presumed to make a suggestion derogatory to the majesty of Rome, and then sent them to prison. Silas, like Paul, was a Roman citizen, but neither the one nor the other had asserted his rank. They were therefore taken to prison, and fetters were placed on their legs as if they had been dangerous criminals. During the night, while the two Apostles were praying to God, the walls were shaken and the fastenings of the doors loosened by an earthquake. The goaler, being answerable for the persons entrusted to his charge, thought that his prisoners had fled, and was going to take his own life in despair, when Paul reassured him. Trembling violently, he rushed to Paul, fell at his feet, received the Gospel of salvation and was baptized at once, together with his household. In the morning lictors came from the municipal authorities, with orders to set the two prisoners free. But Paul refused to leave in such a fashion: "They have beaten us publicly,

uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison: and now do they thrust us out privately? Not so; but let them come and let us out themselves!" The act of reparation demanded by Paul was granted. Nevertheless, after this vexatious incident, it was no longer possible for him to remain at Philippi. Therefore, leaving behind Timothy and Luke, who had not been involved in the matter, he took his leave of Lydia and of the brethren who composed the young church of Philippi, and departed with Silas for Thessalonica.[15]

There was about a hundred miles between the two cities. After about five days of travel, the missionaries arrived at Thessalonica, a great commercial centre, busy and restless. Finely situated at the head of the Thermaic Gulf, over which Olympus towers on the west, the capital of Macedonia had greatly prospered under Roman rule. After the Battle of Philippi, Octavius and Antony, whose cause it had supported, had declared it a free city. As in all the Mediterranean ports, the population here was very mixed, and the various Oriental cults counted numerous votaries in the place, especially in the more plebeian quarters. The Jews formed a large colony and had a synagogue, which was attended by a good number of proselytes and men who feared God. Paul and Silas lodged at the house of a Jew named Jason. As the cost of living was more than commonly high at Thessalonica, the Apostle had to devote the greater part of his time to manual work,[16] and his poverty was so great that on two occasions during

[15] Acts xvi. 11-40.

[16] 1 Thess. ii. 9; 1 Thess. iii. 8.

his stay in this city he accepted assistance from the Christians of Philippi.[17]

Faithful to his practice of preaching the Gospel first to his countrymen, Paul went to the synagogue on the very first sabbath, and discoursed to those present on his habitual theme, Jesus of Nazareth, the Messias sent by God to his people, and disowned by the religious rulers of the Jewish nation. He spoke on three consecutive sabbaths. Some Jews were converted, as well as a considerable number of devout pagans and of women of good social position.

What had formerly happened at Antioch in Pisidia and at Iconium was re-enacted at Thessalonica. The Jews, angry and jealous, turned against Paul, who, being no longer able to speak in the synagogue, began to preach at Jason's house. Thus things went on for some weeks; but Paul's enemies sought means to put an end to this propaganda whose success became more decided from day to day. They enlisted the service of certain bad characters from among the dregs of the populace, some of the loafers who are to be found in every large town and especially in sea-ports, and who are always ready to raise a brawl for anybody who will pay them; the appearance of a riot was excited, and the gang rushed towards Jason's house, with noisy shouts. Paul and Silas were absent. The roughs, seizing on the master of the house, and some Christians who were with him, took them before the municipal officials who, at Thessalonica, were entitled politarchs: "The men who disturb the world," they said, "have come here also; Jason has received them, and these all do contrary to the

[17] Phil. iv. 15, 16.

decrees of Cæsar, claiming that there is another king, Jesus." In this city where the representative of Rome lived, the accusation was as skilful as it was false. The politarchs may well have been impressed. However, as the most guilty persons were not there, and as these riots were of pretty frequent occurrence, and as, in one word, it was all about wretched Jews, from whom the authorities had nothing much to fear, the officials contented themselves with binding over Jason and the believers arrested with him, charging them with threats, to keep the peace in future. Without loss of time, during the very next night, the brethren hurried Paul and Silas from Thessalonica, and placed them on the road to Berœa.[18]

It was two stiff days' journey from Thessalonica to Berœa (the modern Veria), a city lying at the foot of Mount Bermios, a little way off the Egnatian Way, and in the third quarter of Macedonia. Berœa had a Jewish quarter and the missionaries preached there the fulfilment of the great Messianic hope, basing themselves on the Scriptures. There were numerous conversions, even among the Jews. The synagogue remained calm, the Christian community was growing peacefully, when some Jews from Thessalonica arrived, having discovered what was going on at Berœa. Paul, whom the newcomers treated as a renegade, had once again to retreat before the hatred of his enemies. Timothy, who had rejoined his master some time before, remained at Berœa with Silas, while the Apostle, accompanied by some of the faithful, departed secretly for one of the ports of the neighbouring coast. After a voyage of three or four days on a vessel occupied

[18] Acts xvii. 1-10.

in the coasting trade, Paul and his companions landed either at the Piræus or at Phalerum; thence they reached Athens. Paul was entering a new world. On taking leave of the Bereœans, he asked them to tell Silas and Timothy that he would wait for them in the great city and that they were to come on as quickly as possible.[19]

III. In Greece

In the first century of our era, Athens was no longer the intellectual capital of the world. It is true its name still stood high in the eyes of men who were being trained in the art of rhetoric or were engaged in the study of literature or philosophy; but other cities competed with it for the first place in regard to the things of the mind, and the schools of Alexandria, Tarsus, and Rome, attracted students in great numbers. The loyalty of the Athenians to their republican traditions was not a recommendation in the eyes of the Roman emperors; these latter, however, had not curtailed the privileges of Athens, but had allowed it to retain the position of a free city. Athens at this epoch had its gaze turned backwards and lived on its glorious past. This past, in which the pursuit of beauty had expressed itself under such various forms, was attested by numerous and eloquent testimonies: the temples and porticoes, the stelæ and the statues, the Acropolis and its buildings, proclaimed its nobility and perpetuated its memory. Although

[19] Acts xvii. 11-15.

religious feeling was less profound among the Greeks than among many other nations of antiquity, especially the Egyptians, there were nowhere to be seen so many images of gods and goddesses as at Athens. The old national myths had inspired generations of artists of genius, whose works adorned the streets, the squares, the public places and sanctuaries of the city. As Petronius observed, it was easier to find an immortal there than a human being. And in this city, to which art and religion gave such a peculiar physiognomy, there dwelt an intelligent, inquisitive, gay and brilliant population. Under a sky of unparalleled charm, in an air of incomparable purity, in a setting composed of great memories and beautiful forms, in surroundings for which art and nature had done their utmost, the Athenians appreciated to the full the happiness of life.

We can easily understand that Paul's first impression, on entering this environment so entirely new to him, was an intensely disagreeable one. He felt a complete stranger to everything that he saw and heard; he was shocked at the sight of the idolatry which was paraded everywhere; he did not know how to approach these men whose minds were so different from his own. His loneliness was the more painful because Silas and Timothy were no longer with him. At the same time, his faith was too great and his enthusiasm too fervent to let him give way to discouragement or despondency.

There was a Jewish quarter at Athens. Paul got into touch with its inhabitants, and on several occasions preached in their synagogue on the sabbath day. The Jews and those who feared God were thus informed of the Gospel message, but

they remained deaf to the Apostle's appeals; for *Acts* mentions no converts from among them.

As for the Athenians, Paul sought them in the agora, on the days when he was not speaking in the synagogue. The agora was the centre of public life; the curious and the idle, men of business and politicians, rhetoricians and philosophers, plebeians and the city officials, in short all the citizens, resorted to it. The missionary tried to engage this or that in conversation. People listened with some curiosity to this stranger whose manners, language, and dress indicated that he was born under another sky, and belonged to one of those races regarded as barbarians by the Athenians. They decided very soon that he brought no interesting news, and that was enough to make them turn away. If it chanced that some gave a little more attention to his words, when they heard him repeating the terms *Jesus* and *resurrection*, they imagined that the preacher's object was to introduce this new divine couple into the Greek pantheon. The notion of resurrection (*anastasis* in Greek) was quite novel to many of them, and they saw in the word only the name of a goddess associated with Jesus.[20] Whereupon, they shook their heads sceptically, and called Paul a "driveller."

One day it happened that some listeners of a graver turn of mind, some of whom professed the

[20] Acts xvii. 18. "He seemeth to be a setter forth of new gods," said these auditors about Paul. It was a very stupid mistake if these Athenians took Resurrection as a goddess, the consort of Jesus. They really seem, however, to have done so, for St. Luke immediately adds by way of explanation: "Because he preached Jesus and the Resurrection." It was in this sense that St. John Chrysostom understood the text (Homilies, XXXVIII, 1).

Stoic philosophy, while others followed the rule of Epicurus, asked Paul to accompany them to the Areopagus, and to give them a complete statement of his teaching. The Apostle eagerly complied with their request, and went with them to the hill of Mars (Areopagus), a famous spot because the supreme tribunal regularly held its sessions there on certain days of the month. It was a quiet place, perfectly fitted for a long and serious discussion. St. Luke has preserved for us the discourse which Paul delivered under these circumstances; its outline was no doubt given to him by the orator himself. The commencement is tactful: "Men of Athens, I see that in all respects you are very devout. For, passing along your streets, and seeing your sacred objects, I even found an altar with this dedication: To the unknown god." Such a compliment on their piety could not fail to be pleasing to the auditors. We know from ancient authors that the Greeks, and the Romans as well, sometimes erected these anonymous altars on which the name of the god was not specified: it was a precaution and a safeguard in respect of divinities which they did not know, but whose favour and protection they were anxious to secure.[21] From

[21] Philostratus (in his Life of Apollonius of Tyana), Pausanias, Diogenes Laertius, and Tertullian, mention these altars, either anonymous or dedicated to the "unknown gods" which were to be seen at Athens or in the adjacent towns. In 1909 there was discovered at Pergamum an altar of the second century of our era, with the inscription: "To the unknown gods." As the singular form of the dedication does not occur in ancient authors, and is not attested by inscriptions, we may admit, with St. Jerome (*In Titum*, I, 12), that Paul slightly modified the inscription he had read, "considering that there was no need of several unknown gods, but only of one."

this characteristic, which is mentioned to the credit of the Athenians, Paul draws the theme of his discourse. This God whose origin and nature are equally unknown to his hearers, and whom they yet adore, is the very God whose revelation the missionary brings to them, and whose worship he preaches. Their ignorance on this subject ought to cease, and give way to perfect enlightenment. There does exist a God, omnipotent, creator of the universe, who rules all mankind, who wishes to be known by them, and ought to be, because "we are of his lineage," as the Greek poets themselves said.[22] This God, who has no resemblance to the images carved by sculptors, calls on his creatures to begin a new life and to be converted, in prospect of the great judgment at which one will preside whom God has himself raised from the dead. . . . At these words Paul was suddenly interrupted. The Athenians could not understand the need for repentance and a change of life. Some of them treated the matter as a joke, and began to make fun of the speaker. Others, more polite, merely said: "We will hear you on this subject another time," thereby, however, making it plain that a topic of this kind did not interest them. The audience dispersed, and Paul for his part went away, deeply disappointed at not being taken seriously; it was a complete failure, the first in all his apostolic career. It proved conclusively that this society, pervaded by "the wisdom of the world," [23] could

[22] Paul quotes a half-line of the Greek poet Aratus, who lived in the third century before our era. The same idea is found in other writers, especially in Cleanthes of Assos.

[23] 1 Cor. ii. 1-5.

not be so quickly won to belief in Christ. All Paul's work at Athens only resulted in the conversion of a few men, among whom Luke mentions Dionysius the Areopagite, and of a woman named Damaris.[24]

In the meantime, Timothy had rejoined his master, but Paul was in great anxiety about his converts at Thessalonica, fearing that they would end by succumbing under their trials. Unable to go to them personally, and being indeed, as he himself says, no longer eager to do so, Paul did not shrink from depriving himself of the company of Timothy, and sent his disciple to the Thessalonians, to strengthen them in their good intentions, and to support them in their sufferings.[25] As regards Silas, he seems not to have accompanied Timothy to Athens, but had remained in Macedonia either because he had been charged with some special task by Paul, or because he had been kept at Berœa by some complication which had arisen after the Apostle's departure.[26]

Paul did not persist in the teeth of the indifference of the Athenians. He left their city to go to Corinth. At Phalerum or at the Piræus, he took passage on one of the numerous vessels which carried passengers and merchandise to Cenchreæ, at the head of the Saronic Gulf. With a good wind, the crossing could be made in a short day's voyage, and from Cenchreæ to Corinth only took two or three hours on foot.

In antiquity, Corinth was as celebrated as Athens, Ephesus, Alexandria, or Rome. Its peculiarly advantageous situation on the isthmus

[24] Acts xvii. 16-34. [25] 1 Thess. ii. 17; iii. 5.
[26] Acts xviii. 5.

which connects Attica with the Peloponnese had made it, from early times, the mart of the products of the East and of the West. Situated at the meeting-place of the busiest sea-routes, this city had become an enormous centre of commerce; naturally its population had increased in consequence, and also its wealth. The port of Cenchreæ on the east, and that of Lechæum on the west, were but the suburbs of the prosperous city. Over and above the trade activity, which never ceased, the Isthmian Games, which were held every two years, attracted to Corinth thousands of visitors; on this occasion foreigners came from Italy, Asia Minor, and Egypt. The city also owed a large part of its fame to the worship of Venus, the immoral practices involved in which exercised a powerful attraction on all classes of society. According to the testimony of ancient writers, Corinth was an evil spot, where moral degradation reached its lowest depth; many ruined themselves in riotous living there, and, as pleasure there was expensive, there arose the proverbial saying: "It is not everybody's luck to go to Corinth." In the middle of the second century before our era, Corinth had gone through dreadful times. After the insurrection organized by the new Achæan League, the city had been razed to the ground at the instance of some members of the Roman senate, and its inhabitants sold as slaves in the markets of the East. But a century later, in 44 B.C., Julius Cæsar had ordered the restoration of the city which Lucius Mummius had destroyed, and the new Corinth had rapidly become a very populous, very busy, and very rich place. One result of these events was to bring together a population composed of very mixed

elements. Corinth was no longer, strictly speaking, a Greek city; but it continued to be as frivolous and as licentious as ever. Its importance had still further increased when Rome constituted it the capital of the province of Achæa and the seat of the proconsul.

Paul at once saw what a wonderful field for his activity he might find in this cosmopolitan place where so many different races lived side by side without mixing, and where manual workers formed the great majority of the population. He therefore arranged his plan of life with a view to a prolonged stay, and a systematic propaganda. His first care was to find work in order to earn his own bread. At Corinth, as in all the other Mediterranean ports, there was a Jewish colony. Paul there became acquainted with a Jewish household, recently arrived from Rome. The husband, a native of Pontus, was named Aquila, and the wife Prisca or Priscilla.[27] They had been obliged to leave Rome, some time before the Apostle's arrival at Corinth, as the result of an edict of the Emperor Claudius, which decreed the expulsion of the Jews. We cannot tell whether they had embraced Christianity before leaving Italy. Established at Corinth in a house which they rented, they there plied their trade of "tent-makers." This was Paul's own occupation and he offered them his services; his application was granted, and he not only worked with them but also lived at their house. Every Saturday he went to the synagogue, where he preached the mystery of Jesus to the Jews and the proselytes.[28]

[27] Priscilla is only the diminutive of Prisca. The name Prisca would incline one to think that the wife was born at Rome.

[28] Acts xviii. 1-4.

In the meantime both Silas and Timothy had left Macedonia, and had rejoined their master at Corinth. The news that Timothy brought from Thessalonica was of a kind to cheer Paul's mind: the believers remained unshaken in their faith, and set the other churches a good example of perseverance.[29] Completely relieved about the Thessalonians, the Apostle preached with new energy in Jewish circles at Corinth, aided by his two assistants. His efforts were rewarded by numerous conversions. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, received baptism with all his house. This event caused a sensation in the ghetto. Hitherto the intransigent Jews had only offered Paul a secret opposition; but from this moment, realizing the danger that threatened their traditional beliefs, they declared open war against the missionary. The conflict soon reached such a pitch of violence that Paul could not continue to preach in the synagogue. Thereupon, repeating the action he had gone through long ago at Antioch in Pisidia, he shook over his opponents the dust from his dress, and in order to bring home to them the rejection of the Jews in favour of the Gentiles, he went out with these words: "Your blood be upon your own heads! *I* am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the pagans." A certain Titus Justus, who belonged to the number of those who feared God, and lived close to the synagogue, offered him his house, that he might make it his regular place of preaching.[30]

No doubt it was about the time of this quarrel that Paul was favoured with another vision. He was comforted by a dream during the night, and

[29] 1 Thess. i. 1-10; ii. 14; iii. 6-7; 2 Thess. i. 3, 4.
[30] Acts xviii. 5-8.

heard the Saviour's voice saying: "Do not fear but speak and hold not thy peace, because I am with thee: and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." Fortified by this command and this promise, he redoubled his efforts among the pagans.[31] The young Corinthian church developed rapidly. Its members belonged for the greater part to the humblest classes: they consisted chiefly of slaves, journeymen, and the poorer sort of artisans. The meetings were held in Titius Justus's house and no doubt in some other houses also.[32] The community soon had an energetic religious life of its own. From the two epistles to the Corinthians we can see the pains that Paul took in the instruction and training of his converts, the difficulties which he had to surmount in organizing religious meetings, the abuses which he had to restrain in the celebration of the Eucharistic Agape, and the moral disorders which he had to check.

While preaching at Corinth, Paul kept in touch with the churches he had founded in Asia Minor and in Macedonia: he loved them too much to forget them. Some Thessalonians visited him one day, sent no doubt by their brethren, and informed him of the fears which troubled them with regard to the fate of their dead. Since Paul's departure from Thessalonica, some members of the church there had died, and the faithful asked themselves anxiously how these dead could be present at the glorious return of Christ, an event which they often

[31] Acts xviii. 9, 10.

[32] Thus Gaius is called by Paul his host and the host of the whole Church, in Rom. xvi. 23. For this Gaius see 1 Cor. i. 14.

thought of, and which seemed very near. In order to reassure his dear friends in Thessalonica, and to dispel their sadness, the Apostle wrote to them. In this letter, the oldest in the canonical collection, he explained to them that the dead would suffer no disadvantage in comparison with the living because they would rise to join in the triumphal procession of the just which would go to meet the Saviour.

Some months later Paul heard that the Thessalonians were passing through another crisis. Persuaded that the return of Christ was imminent, and excited by alleged private revelations which fixed the time of it, they lost interest in work and lived in idleness, day-dreaming, and foolish talk. This occasioned a second letter, in which Paul declared that nobody was entitled to fix the date of the Saviour's coming, that the presaging signs of the final drama had not yet appeared, and that in any case the great law of work must be observed, in accordance with the teaching and example which he himself had given them.

The *Acts* mentions a violent incident which took place during the Apostle's stay at Corinth. The Jews, becoming more and more bitter against him, decided to accuse him before the Roman governor, in the hope that an order of expulsion might be obtained against him. They fell upon Paul, seized him and brought him before the proconsul's judgment seat. The governor at this time was Gallio, the elder brother of the philosopher Seneca.[33] According to the testimony of his

[33] An inscription found at Delphi and published in 1905 by Bourguet (De rebus Delphicis imperatoriæ ætatis capita duo) enables us to fix the date of Gallio's proconsulate between May, 51, and May, 53. This date is the pivot of Pauline chronology.

contemporaries, he was a lovable man, a man of noble heart and cultured mind. The accusation was formulated by Sosthenes, the successor of Crispus in the office of ruler of the synagogue. "This man," he said, pointing to Paul, "persuades men to worship God contrary to the Law." This was, in fact, the chief grievance which the Jews had against the missionary: he was a schismatic in relation to his own race, and professed a doctrine which led in practice to a denial of the privileges of the children of Israel. Paul was just opening his lips to defend himself, when Gallio stopped him and himself spoke. In his eyes it was just a case of a dispute between adherents of the same religion, and although the Roman authorities recognized Judaism as a lawful cult, the proconsul considered that it was not his business to interfere in disputes of this sort: "If it were some matter of injustice or an heinous deed, O Jews, I should with reason bear with you. But if they be questions of doctrine and names and of your Law, look you to it: I will not be judge of such things." These words were sufficiently contemptuous to leave no possible doubt about the proconsul's feelings. Gallio next ordered the court to be cleared. Thereupon there was some disorder, and the populace, always hostile to the Jews, took this opportunity to assault Sosthenes, who was beaten savagely. The affair ended badly for its authors.[34]

After this incident Paul still remained several months at Corinth. At the beginning of the year 54, believing that his work had been firmly established and could now develop in his absence, he decided to return to Antioch in Syria, which he had

[34] Acts xviii. 12-17.

left three years before on this second journey. He bade farewell to the community, and departed, accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla, who wished to cross over to Asia in order to settle at Ephesus. His stay at Corinth had been eighteen months.[35] As for Silas and Timothy, they remained behind.

Before embarking at Cenchreæ, Paul had his head shaved, on account of a vow the nature of which is not explained in *Acts*. The ship put in at Ephesus for some days. The Apostle took advantage of this interval to get into touch with the Jews of this city. He spoke in the synagogue, and when his hearers wished to keep him longer, he excused himself for being unable to remain, by pleading his desire to be at Jerusalem for the Pasch, but he promised to return. He took his leave of Aquila and his wife, and after a voyage of probably not less than a fortnight's duration, he landed at Cæsarea, whence he reached Jerusalem. He saw the rulers of the mother-church, gave them a report of his missionary labours, and after the festival, took the road to Antioch the Great.[36]

[35] Acts xviii. 11.
[36] Acts xviii. 18-22.

CHAPTER IX

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

My daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches.
(2 Cor. xi. 28.)

After some weeks spent among his brethren at Antioch, Paul decided to undertake a third missionary journey. He was eager to see again his Galatian friends, whose good-will was so great, and whose affectionate care had left such pleasant memories. Moreover, he knew that he was expected at Ephesus, where he had only called in passing, and where he had a scheme of founding a church whose importance would not be inferior to that of Corinth. As on his previous journeys, he needed a companion. Silas had remained at Corinth, and, for reasons which we are ignorant of, he was destined, a little later, to be associated with the ministry of St. Peter.[1] As for Timothy, he had received the duty of watching over the recently organized churches, both in Achæa, and in Macedonia, and travelled from one Ægean port to another. To take their place, Paul chose Titus, the young converted pagan whom he had taken to Jerusalem four years before, and on whose behalf he had successfully resisted the Judaizers.

Towards the end of the spring of 54 Paul set out, accompanied by Titus. At first he followed the

[1] 1 Peter iv. 12.

same route as he had done on his last journey, passing through Tarsus, the Cilician Gates, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia. It was his third visit to the communities in the interior of Asia Minor. He next re-visited the faithful of Galatia, whom he found as fervent as he had left them.[2] Then he traversed Phrygia, a mountainous and almost desert region, and by way of the Caÿster valley, beautiful with its meadows and orchards, he reached Ephesus.[3]

I. At Ephesus

Ephesus was at this period the most important city of Asia Minor, and one of the greatest in the world. In population, it ranked immediately after Rome and Alexandria, rivalled Antioch and Corinth, and took precedence of Smyrna, Pergamum and Miletus, its famous neighbours. Situated, as far as regards Europe, at the entrance to the province of Asia, of which it was the administrative capital, it played the same part as Corinth on the other side of the Ægean. Its commercial activity was immense, and wealth abounded. A great travel port and business centre, Ephesus detained the traveller with its stadiums, theatres, and gymnasiums. It detained him also by means of its pleasures, for, to say nothing of its fortune-tellers, mimes, and magicians, its courtesans were no less celebrated than those of Corinth. Lastly, it had its temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders

[2] This second visit to Galatia is attested by the epistle to the Galatians (iv. 13).

[3] Acts xviii. 23; xix. 1.

of the world; its goddess enjoyed a world-wide reputation, and her worship had grown to considerable dimensions.

When Paul arrived in this wealthy city, he found a small group of believers. Some time after the Apostle had passed through Ephesus, during his second journey, an Alexandrian Jew, named Apollos, had come to visit his brethren in the ghetto at Ephesus. He was proficient in Scriptural learning and endowed with magnificent oratorical power. He had been converted to the Christian faith by some Greek-speaking disciple imperfectly instructed, it appears, in Christian doctrine, and in his enthusiasm he had made himself a preacher of the Gospel. At Ephesus, he expounded the revelation of Jesus in the synagogue, repeating all that he had been taught about Christ, his teaching, and his deeds, interpreting the Scriptures like a master, and winning the interest of everybody by his remarkable eloquence. He had convinced several of his hearers, about a dozen, and had baptized them with the baptism of John, the only one that he knew. In the meantime, Aquila and Priscilla, having heard him speak, had taken him to their house, and completed his instruction. Then, equipped with a less summary doctrinal outfit, Apollos had yielded to the urgent request of some Corinthian travellers, who begged him to come and preach at Corinth, and had left for Achæa, with a letter of introduction from the Christian group at Ephesus.[4]

Such was the situation when Paul arrived and asked for hospitality from his friends, Aquila and Priscilla. He learnt from them under what con-

[4] Acts xviii. 24-28.

ditions and in what way the Gospel had been preached to the Ephesians, and he began by assembling the believers converted by Apollos. He very soon discovered, on questioning them, that their religious knowledge was imperfect; for instance, they did not even suspect the existence of the Holy Ghost. The Apostle completed their instruction, taught them what Christian baptism was, baptized them in the name of Jesus, and laid his hands upon them. Thereupon they were filled with the Spirit of God, and favoured with those extraordinary gifts which God gave so frequently to the earliest Christians, such as the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy.[5]

In conformity with his practice in every city where there was a Jewish colony, Paul addressed himself first of all to his compatriots. For three entire months he discoursed every Saturday in the synagogue about the things of the kingdom of God. What with the indifference of some and the hostile attitude of others, the missionary had to give up the Jews and turn his efforts towards the pagan world. As he needed a hall to preach and assemble the faithful in, he entered into an agreement with a professor named Tyrannus, who gave him the free use of his premises at the time of day when he himself was not teaching, that is, from eleven in the morning till four in the afternoon.[6] For two years Paul expounded the Gospel message in the hall thus rented by him. In the morning he worked at his trade in Aquila's workshop, for he was still anxious not to be a burden to anyone; and this

[5] Acts xix. 2-7.

[6] This Tyrannus was not a Jewish rabbi teaching his pupils, but a professor of literature or philosophy.

fidelity to his daily work enabled him on a later occasion to commend to the Ephesians the duty of charity to the poor by citing his own case, and showing them his hands hardened with work.[7] About noon, he went to the class-room of Tyrannus, where the faithful of every rank, together with the inquisitive, and the idle, made up a continually changing audience. To both classes of listeners he spoke of Christ, of this God who had become man for love of men, of this Saviour whose blood shed on the cross had a regenerating and redeeming virtue; he boasted of the beauty of Christian brotherhood, and of the life lived in union with Christ; he repeated the Divine promises, and commented on the most consoling words of the Master. Towards evening he went to see those who had been unable to come to him, those whom he knew to be ill or prevented by work. Finally at nightfall, he assembled the members of the Christian community in order to eat with them the fraternal meal called the agape, and drew again the picture of the Last Supper, or enlarged on the inexhaustible subject of Christ's love for those that are his. Little by little the circle of believers broadened, and, thanks to the new converts, the propagation of the Gospel—as we gather from the letter to the Colossians[8]—spread even into the valley of the Lycus, where Christian groups were formed in the cities of Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis.[9]

Paul's prestige and influence were increased by the miracles he performed. Not only did the exorcisms carried out by him have marvellous

[7] Acts xx. 33-35.
[8] Col. iv. 12, 13.
[9] Acts xix. 8-10.

effects, but cures of sick persons were obtained by his intervention. What is more, the mere touch of his handkerchiefs or of the aprons which he used in his work, was sufficient to effect not less extraordinary physical and moral cures.[10] The witnesses of these miracles had noticed that they were accomplished "in the name of Jesus." In the pagan population of Ephesus, where numbers practised magic, either as their regular occupation or as amateurs, the idea arose that Paul was a magician without equal, possessed of a more efficacious magic formula than any other. They extolled his power over the world of spirits and over the forces of nature. An incident which was none of his seeking added to his reputation.

We know from the historian Josephus that Jewish exorcists abounded in Palestine. Such men were to be found also among the people of the Diaspora, and not only their own countrymen but pagans as well, had recourse to their assistance in order to procure the formulæ and incantations, the amulets and philtres, in which the common people had such unbounded confidence. Some of these wandering exorcists or magicians, on their way through Ephesus, were informed of the marvellous results obtained by Paul, adopted the Apostle's formula, and began to conjure the evil spirits "in the name of Jesus whom Paul preaches." One day when two of these Jewish impostors, sons of a man named Scevas, who belonged to one of the priestly families, were exorcising a demoniac with the help of this new formula, the spirit answered: "I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but as for you, I do not know you." And suddenly the demoniac leapt upon

[10] Acts xix. 11-12.

them, tore their clothing and showered blows on them. It was as much as the exorcists could do to escape with their lives. Naturally the story spread in the city and made an immense impression on pagans no less than on believers. Among these latter, many had been addicted to magic before their conversion; even after baptism they did not entirely give up their old habits, but, more or less secretly, resorted to the spells and divination which the occult sciences recommended as efficacious. When they heard about the two exorcists, they were seized with fear, and realized that practices of this sort were incompatible with faith in Christ. Convinced of their guilt, they brought their books of magic to Paul, and in the presence of the assembled brethren they were thrown into a fire. The market value of what was thus burned amounted to fifty thousand drachmæ of silver; a fact which implies that the greater part of these writings were on parchment, and that incantations were decidedly expensive at Ephesus.[11]

The work of evangelization to which Paul devoted himself so earnestly at Ephesus did not prevent him watching over the development of the other communities, from replying to the questions which they addressed to him or from intervening whenever he thought it necessary by sending messengers to carry to them his admonitions and advice. In the early months of 57 the Corinthians consulted him about various points of dogma, morals, and discipline.[12] About the same time he was informed that factions were being formed inside the church at Corinth, that certain members spoke

[11] Acts xix. 13-20. [12] 1 Cor. vii. 1.

slightingly of him and endeavoured to diminish his authority, that signs of laxity injurious to morals and to charity had appeared, and that two members of the community were notoriously leading a scandalous life. He thereupon wrote to the Corinthians.[13] As regards the attacks of which he was the object, he firmly defends his right to the title of an Apostle, and shows how divisions among the faithful are contrary to the law of charity, and prejudicial to the common good. He decrees that excommunication is to be pronounced against the man who is living in the married state with his stepmother, he decides the cases of conscience which have been submitted to him, and defines several points of doctrine, particularly the resurrection of the dead. At the end of his letter he tells his correspondents that he is coming to see them in the autumn, on the way back from a journey which he proposes to make to Macedonia. For the moment he is detained at Ephesus, where his apostolic labours are extending more and more and where also his enemies are rising against him.

Paul entrusted his letter to some believers who were leaving for Corinth. He had no suspicion that instead of restoring peace to the Corinthian church, it would only have the effect of alienating still further those who accused him of ambition, duplicity, and rigorism. He would have wished that Apollos, who had returned to Ephesus some time before, had accompanied the bearers of the letter, for he had a high opinion of Apollos's integrity and zeal, and thought him competent to

[13] This letter is our first epistle to the Corinthians. In reality, another letter had already been sent to them (see 1 Cor. v. 9), but it has not been preserved.

restore peace and unity in the troubled and divided community, but the Alexandrian evangelist insisted on remaining with the Apostle whose humble disciple he now considered himself.[14] Timothy, who, about the same time, had been sent to Macedonia with Erastus, one of Paul's assistants at Ephesus, was to call at Corinth on his return journey.[15]

The evangelization of Ephesus did not proceed without friction, and the Apostle had a great deal to suffer, both in body and spirit, during the long period he spent in this city. In the two letters to the Corinthians he makes allusions in passing to the struggles which he went through, and the dangers he incurred.[16] What he says in the second of these letters about the blows which he had received, and the imprisonments he had endured, the dangers of death which he had escaped, must be for the most part referred to the period of the Ephesian ministry.[17] There was the opposition of the Jews, whose cunning manœuvres raised all sorts of obstacles in Paul's way.[18] There was also the opposition of the pagans, alarmed at the progress of this new religion which regarded the worship of idols as useless and unlawful. Of all these conflicts and perils which Paul met with at Ephesus, St. Luke has only preserved one episode—the last, it seems, if not the most violent.

The worship of Artemis formed a formidable obstacle to the spread of the Gospel. Artemis, the Diana of the Romans, was the patron goddess of

[14] 1 Cor. xvi. 12.
[15] Acts xix. 22; 1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11.
[16] 1 Cor. iv. 9-13; xv. 32; xvi. 9; 2 Cor. i. 8-11; iv. 8-12; cf. Rom. xvi. 3, 4.
[17] 2 Cor. xi. 23-27.
[18] Acts xix. 33.

Ephesus, and all the Ephesians were proud of her temple, which was a splendid symbol of the power and wealth of their city. The worship was in the charge of a large body of priests; magnificent festivals drew to it multitudes of visitors; there were public games, held in the month sacred to Artemis; members of the provincial congress, distinguished by the title of Asiarchs, presided over the administration of the cult. As in all places of pilgrimage, workers in precious metals and the makers of statues prospered around the sanctuary: traders sold to the worshippers statuettes of the goddess, and also small models of the temple, in which Artemis was represented in her cella; these objects were made in earthenware or metal, and as the merchants retailed them in great quantities, a large number of people was supported by this industry. Now Paul, in his preaching, attacked idolatry unreservedly, and with special vigour, a fact which was certain, sooner or later, to earn him the hatred of those who suffered in their pockets from his work.

This is what happened in the course of the summer of 57. A certain Demetrius, an influential member of the guild of jewellers, and a manufacturer of small silver temples, inflamed his colleagues and their workmen against the Apostle, by pointing out to them how the doctrine preached by this man threatened to ruin their trade, and even to abolish the worship of the great goddess of Ephesus. In great excitement, Demetrius's hearers rushed through the city crying: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians." [19] Nothing more was needed to stir

[19] An intaglio of the Roman period, presented to the Louvre in 1926, represents on one side Artemis, with the

the people, and an enormous crowd made for the theatre, the benches and porticoes of which were inundated as on the days of great dramatic spectacles. On the way the rioters had seized two of Paul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, both natives of Macedonia. Hearing of what was going on, the Apostle wanted to go to the theatre, but was prevented by some disciples who feared for his life. Some of the Asiarchs, whom he knew and who were friendly to him, also sent him a message to keep quiet. Meanwhile confusion reigned in the theatre; many of the people did not know why they were there, and shouts about anything and everything rang out on all sides. Some Jews were there among the crowd. One of them, named Alexander, wished to make a speech in the name of his co-religionists, in order no doubt to dissociate their party from that of the Christians; but he was recognized as a Jew, and the noise only increased, so that it was impossible for him to make himself heard. For two hours there was nothing but cheers in honour of Artemis. At the end of that time, the clerk of the city, an important person, succeeded in obtaining silence, and in order to quell the riot, made his fellow-citizens a tactful little speech. "Men of Ephesus," he said, "who can be ignorant that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, and of her image fallen from heaven? Seeing that this is beyond denial, you ought to remain calm and do nothing imprudent. You have brought here these men

words: "Great is the Fortune of Rome and of Ephesus!" which recalls those given in Acts xix. 28 (*Comptes-rendus de l'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 1926, p. 202).

although they are not guilty of blasphemy or of sacrilege against your goddess. If therefore Demetrius and his workmen have a complaint against anyone, there are courts and there are proconsuls: let them state their accusation. And if you have any other question on your minds, it can be decided in an ordinary assembly, for we are certainly in danger of being accused of sedition for this day's work, seeing that there is nothing that we can produce as a reason for this meeting." These well-directed words produced the expected effect: the ringleaders dared not insist further, and the crowd dispersed.[20]

The situation, however, remained full of danger for Paul, who decided to withdraw. He had been preaching the Gospel at Ephesus for nearly three years.[21]

II. In Macedonia and Greece

Before starting once more for Jerusalem,[22] in order to carry to the parent church the result of the collections held in the communities founded by him, the Apostle wished first of all to re-visit his Christians in Macedonia and in Corinth.[23] He called together the faithful at Ephesus, urged them to persevere, and after saying good-bye to them embarked for Troas, accompanied by Timothy.[24] He hoped to find there Titus, whom he had sent

[20] Acts xix. 23-40.
[21] Acts xix. 8, 10; xx. 31.
[22] Acts xix. 21.
[23] 1 Cor. xvi. 5.
[24] Acts xx. 1.

to Corinth some months before to restore peace there, and who was to return through Macedonia.[25] But he was disappointed. Titus was not at Troas. Although this city offered an attractive field for missionary work, Paul did not delay there: he was anxious about the Corinthians, and impatient to get definite news of their attitude towards him. He crossed to Macedonia to meet Titus half-way.[26] At last Titus arrived. He brought good news which delighted the Apostle. From Philippi, or Thessalonica, he wrote again to those who had given him so much anxiety for two years. After defending his conduct at length, he commended to their notice the collection for the church at Jerusalem, and finished with a strongly-worded apostrophe to his opponents. Titus went off with this letter while his master remained in Macedonia till the end of the autumn.[27]

Paul then made his way to Corinth. The community there was at peace, and during several months the Apostle was occupied in making his work secure. It was then that the news from Galatia revealed to him the perfidious manœuvres of the Judaizers in that region. Self-appointed preachers had taught the Galatian believers, as they had once taught those of Antioch, the necessity of circumcision and of the observance of the Law. In a passion of anger against those who had thus

[25] It appears probable that Paul had gone in person to Corinth some weeks after the despatch of the letter which we know as the "first to the Corinthians" (cf. 2 Cor. xii. 14), that this visit had an unhappy result, and that afterwards Titus was charged with a mission of reconciliation.

[26] 2 Cor. ii. 12, 14.

[27] Acts xx. 2.

seduced his children in Christ, and compromised the efficacy of the Gospel, and with feelings of strong affection for the unfortunate converts, whose good faith had been abused, Paul composed a letter in which gentleness is mixed with sharpness, and tenderness with irony. Of all the pages written by the Apostle, these are perhaps the ones that best reflect his soul and his temperament.

During this second stay at Corinth he composed the Epistle to the Romans. He had long had dreams of going to Italy and preaching in the capital of the Empire.[28] He knew that there existed at Rome an important church, and he was afraid that their minds might be poisoned against him before the journey which he designed. In order to dispose the Roman Christians to receive him favourably, he addressed to them a detailed and closely reasoned statement of his teaching on salvation. Taking up again the theme sketched out in the epistle to the Galatians, he developed it *ex professo*, after the style of a theological treatise, putting in a clear light the principle of justification by faith, and showing how the Gospel offers to all men an efficacious means of salvation, on condition that they believe, that is, that they give an intellectual assent to the revealed doctrine, and carry out the rules of conduct which follow from it. Of all subjects, this is the most important as it is the most difficult. In Paul's theological work the Epistle to the Romans is the masterpiece, the writing in which he has set forth his ideas most systematically, in which the depth and power of his thought are most apparent. It abounds with marks of originality and is full of luminous glimpses of the nature

[28] Acts xix. 21; Rom. i. 11; xv. 22-24.

and operation of grace. These pages are so loaded with matter that for nineteen centuries they have been drawn from, without being exhausted, by all types of Christian thinkers.

The Apostle composed this letter in the course of the winter of 57-58. In the meantime, his assistants had finished the collection. As Paul was embarking for Syria and Palestine, after a stay of three months at Corinth, he was informed that the Jews who had taken passage on the same vessel had formed a plot against him. He thereupon changed his plan, and decided to return to Macedonia, whence he could reach Asia Minor and Syria by sea. He therefore set out northwards, accompanied by the bearers of the alms collected for Jerusalem: they were Sopater of Bercœa, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Tychicus and Trophimus of Ephesus; in addition, the party included Timothy, Titus, and Luke.[29]

Paul saw once more the believers at Thessalonica and Philippi. He even remained some time at the latter place to celebrate the Paschal festival while the bulk of the party went on ahead and crossed to Troas in Asia Minor. Just after the days of unleavened bread, the Apostle embarked at Neapolis, which served as a port for Philippi, and, after a rough crossing, rejoined his companions at Troas. He spent a week there. A remarkable thing happened at the farewell meeting. It was on a Sunday night: the faithful had assembled in a room on an upper floor for the breaking of bread. Many lamps were burning; it was warm in the room and the windows had been opened. Paul spoke, and as his discourse lasted a long time, one

[29] Acts xx. 3, 4.

of those present, a youth named Eutychus, fell fast asleep. As he was sitting on a window-sill, he lost his balance and fell down from the third storey to the ground. They all thought he was dead. Paul went down, lifted him in his arms, and reassured the others: "Do not be afraid; his life is in him." Then going upstairs again, he went on to the breaking of bread, and continued his discourse till dawn.[30]

On the Monday, the Apostle's companions took passage on a vessel which made voyages along the coast of Asia Minor. Paul joined them the same evening at Assos, where he had travelled by road escorted by the Christians of Troas. The ship called at Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Trogylium, and Miletus. The course lay close to Ephesus, but there was not time to call there; Paul wished to be at Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. Unable to say good-bye to the Ephesians in their own city, he sent them a message asking them to come to Miletus. They came at once. The Apostle delivered to them his last wishes in touching words; his feelings made his voice falter, and his hearers sobbed. They all knelt down and prayed together, the father for his children and the children for their father. At daybreak they had to part, for the ship was going to weigh anchor. The faithful both of Ephesus and of Miletus accompanied Paul to the harbour, embraced him tenderly, and no doubt stood long watching the sail filled by the wind; they were heartbroken by the words of the departing Apostle: "You will see my face no more." [31]

In three days they reached Patara on the coast

[30] Acts xx. 5-12. [31] Acts xx. 13-38.

of Lycia, after touching at Cos and Rhodes. At Patara, the party removed to another vessel which was sailing directly for Phœnicia. They passed in sight of Cyprus, leaving the island on their left. There it was that Paul had commenced his apostolic ministry, in association with Barnabas, fifteen years before. After a voyage of only four or five days, they arrived at Tyre, where the cargo was to be unloaded. A Christian community existed here, and the Apostle had received their hospitality on his way from Antioch to Jerusalem for the famous council of 49-50. Once more he was welcomed by the brethren of Tyre, and spent a whole week with them. When he was going to depart, the Tyrian Christians earnestly insisted that he should not go to Jerusalem, as the Spirit had revealed to some of them the grave dangers to which Paul would be exposed there. But he was inflexible in his resolution and persevered in his design. The faithful accompanied him to the quay. All of them were there, with their wives and children. All knelt on the sandy shore, and after prayer, farewells were said, and the apostolic party took their places on board a ship bound for Ptolemais (the modern Acre). At this place the sea voyage ended. Ptolemais, like Tyre, had its church; the pilgrims stayed a day there, and on the next, taking the main road which wound under the shoulder of Carmel, they reached Cæsarea in one stage.[32]

Philip the deacon had long before settled at Cæsarea, after evangelizing all the adjacent district. He lived there with his four daughters, who were favoured with the gift of prophecy. Paul and his companions lodged at his house, and remained some

[32] Acts xxi. 1-8.

days before going up to Jerusalem. While they were there, the prophet Agabus, whom Paul had met once at Antioch, arrived from Judea. Agabus undid Paul's girdle and took it from him without a word. Then, tying up with it his own hands and feet, he said in an inspired tone: "Thus saith the Holy Ghost: The man whose girdle this is, the Jews shall bind in this manner in Jerusalem, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." The witnesses of this scene, deeply impressed by the words they had heard, implored Paul to give up his plan. To all their tears and prayers the Apostle remained immovable, merely uttering these reproachful words: "What do you mean, weeping and afflicting my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but to die also in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Realizing that their entreaties were useless, his disciples and the faithful of Cæsarea ceased to press him, and said: "The will of the Lord be done."

When the moment of separation had come, some of the brethren at Cæsarea joined the party, and so also did a Greek-speaking Jew named Mnason. The latter, who was a native of Cyprus, and therefore a compatriot of Barnabas's, possessed a house in the Holy City, large enough to accommodate Paul and his companions. He kindly placed it at the disposal of the pilgrims. This offer was the more welcome because Paul was anxious to avoid any friction with his brethren of the strict observance, and because the group included some uncircumcised persons, awkward guests to entertain in the society of Jerusalem. It took two good days to travel from Cæsarea to Jerusalem.

The party covered the distance on foot, with anxious hearts, and minds beset with the gloomiest presentiments.[33] When they arrived, the Jews and Christians alike were preparing to celebrate the feast of Pentecost.

[33] Acts xxi. 8-16.

CHAPTER X

THE IMPRISONMENT

I. The Arrest at Jerusalem

Bands and afflictions wait for me at Jerusalem.
(Acts xx. 23.)

PHILIP the deacon and Mnason the Cypriote were both of the same spirit as Barnabas: from them Paul received nothing but devoted sympathy. The communities visited by him during his return journey, from Corinth to Cæsarea, had shown him an affection and a veneration the marks of which had on some occasions moved him to tears. He felt closely united, not only by charity, but in a communion of thought and feeling, with the faithful whom he had left in Greece, Macedonia and Asia Minor. The memory of these churches he had founded at the price of such sacrifices, was continually present to his mind, and his thought turned naturally to the various groups of Christians who composed his true family. He was the Apostle of the Gentiles.

Everything inclines us to believe that in spite of his trust in Him who had sent him out on this road of preaching to the pagans, and supported him in its course, Paul was not without some apprehension for the future of his missionary work, when he

entered the gates of Jerusalem. What would be his reception from the Elders, and the brethren in the Holy City? How would they look on the work which he had so courageously accomplished? How would they accept the offering collected by his efforts and brought by him to the " saints " of the parent church? No doubt he knew James's loyalty, and could not doubt his fidelity to the agreements they had before arrived at; but he knew that James was surrounded by the persons who were hostile to his missionary methods, and that James himself was very sensitive on all points pertaining to the Law and Tradition. He was not ignorant that the church at Jerusalem was still influenced by Judaizers, that is, by the men who had strained every nerve to ruin his work at Antioch, in Galatia, at Corinth, and in many other places. Peter was not at hand to support him with his high authority; as for Barnabas and Silas, they were engaged at a distance. In the event of a disagreement, Paul single-handed would have to defend his cause, which was the cause of all the converted Gentiles.

The first meeting with the Christians of Jerusalem was of such a kind as to reassure the Apostle and his companions. The party was joyfully welcomed by those who met them on their arrival. On the following day James, who had been informed of their coming beforehand, summoned the leaders of the church at Jerusalem, and received Paul and the deputies of the distant churches at his house. This was the critical moment. After the customary salutations, when those present had exchanged the words of peace, Paul addressed them, giving an account of what he had done, enumerating the marvels worked by God in the Gentile world,

showing that he himself had conformed in every particular to the agreements concluded between him and the " pillars " of the Church, and presenting as a sign of his fidelity to the engagements he had made long since, the fruits of the collection held by him for the assistance of the poor at Jerusalem.[1] The Ancients returned thanks to God for all that he had done through Paul's ministry. At the same time, their prejudices against the Apostle were not entirely removed, and they thought it would be opportune or even necessary that he should give some visible and unequivocal proof of his loyalty to the Law, of such a character as to conciliate the feelings of those whom his attitude or his actions had disturbed or alarmed. There was a rumour current, in fact, among the Judaizers, firm supporters of the Law, that Paul had preached apostasy to the Jews of the Dispersion, telling them not to have their children circumcised, and to abandon the traditional customs. It was important to kill this rumour, which was giving scandal to the Judaizers, and was calculated to cause trouble, for Paul's presence at Jerusalem could not remain a secret. In the opinion of the Ancients assembled at James's house to hear the missionary, Paul ought by some public act to demonstrate the falsity of these accusations. " Do therefore this that we say to thee: we have four men who have a vow on them. Take them and sanctify thyself with them, and pay for them that they may cut their hair. And all will know that the things which they have heard of thee are false but that thou thyself also walkest keeping the Law." Though

[1] Peter, James and John had urged Paul not to forget to give assistance to the mother-church. (Gal. ii. 9, 10.)

expressed in the form of a recommendation, this was really a command, and all the more so as it interpreted the wish of the whole assembly and not of James alone.

Paul could have refused, for in fact he had never ceased to observe the Law as far as he personally was concerned, and he had always advised the converted Jews to remain faithful to their customs so far as they were not an obstacle to Christian conduct. The statements which circulated in Jerusalem and which had been rather officiously repeated by the Ancients, were set on foot by malevolent persons whose narrowness and hostility were obvious; all this the Apostle knew, and it would have been very natural for him to have refused to make the gesture demanded. But on the other hand, his whole life was dominated by one rule which preceded all others, the rule of charity, and he had already on several occasions given an example of the humblest self-renunciation, when the general good demanded the sacrifice of his own opinions or preferences. He therefore undertook to provide for the four indigent Nazarites of whom the Ancients had spoken.

The Jewish institution of Nazarites was a very ancient one. It is found described in the Book of Numbers,[2] and the Mishna devotes a whole tract to it. It centred round a vow taken in order to obtain some favour from God. From the day on which he pronounced the vow, the Israelite found himself removed from the conditions of normal existence; he was as one consecrated to God, must abstain from all fermented liquor, and was not allowed to cut his hair. At the date fixed by him,

[2] Num. vi. 1-21.

usually at the end of thirty days,[3] he was released from his vow on performing the rites of purification prescribed by the Law: he offered in the Temple the victims required in such circumstances, that is, a lamb, an ewe, a ram, and a basket of unleavened bread, he shaved his head, and burned his hair on the altar on which smoked the fat of the peace-offering. Poor men who had bound themselves by such a vow were not in a position to provide the costs of the sacrifice; they must therefore resort to the charity of some rich and pious person: the man who delivered a Nazarite by paying for him performed a meritorious action.[4]

On the following day, Paul, after going through the rites of purification which were obligatory in such a case, took the four Nazarites, and went up to the Temple in order to make the required declaration about the termination of the vow, and to make an appointment with the priests in view of the sacrifices prescribed. The series of purificatory rites and other ceremonies must have been very complicated, for the text of Acts seems to say that they would not be over till after seven days.[5]

[3] According to the Mishna (Nazir i. 3) and Josephus (*Jewish War*, II, 15, 1) the minimum period was a month.

[4] Josephus (Ant. xix. 6, 1) relates that Agrippa I thus assisted a large number of Nazarites on the occasion of his first visit to Jerusalem.

[5] Acts xxi. 17-26. It is difficult to see clearly the meaning of v. 26. Some hold that Paul had himself taken the Nazarite vow; but nobody could be a Nazarite for a week. Again, we cannot tell whether the sacrifices of the four Nazarites had to be offered on four separate days. In v. 27 St. Luke speaks of the seven days drawing to an end, but this expression only adds to the difficulty when we compare it with the chronological indications given in xxiv. 11.

Great numbers of Jewish pilgrims had come to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost; there were some from all the great cities of the Diaspora, especially from the province of Asia. Certain persons among them knew Paul of old, because they had expelled him from their synagogues as an apostate and a blasphemer.[6] Moreover, the pupil of Gamaliel had bitter enemies in the orthodox circles in the Holy City.[7] The Apostle's presence was not long in becoming known. Some Jews from Ephesus saw him in the streets in the company of Trophimus, one of their fellow-citizens converted to the Christian faith. They at once started the rumour that Paul had introduced this pagan into the sanctuary, that is, into the sacred enclosure the entrance to which was forbidden, on pain of death, to all that did not belong to the house of Israel.[8] This was all that was required to stir the Jews to fury. Before the end of the seven days which were fixed as the period of the ceremonies obligatory for the Nazarites, when Paul happened to be in the inner court of the Temple, some Asiatic Jews excited the crowd against him, and threw themselves upon him, crying: "Help, children of Israel! This is the man that teaches all men everywhere against the people and the Law and this place; and moreover has brought in Gentiles into the Temple, and has violated the holy place." The Temple staff

[6] Cf. Acts ix. 23; xiii. 50; xiv. 5, 19; xvii. 5, 13; xx. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 24.

[7] Cf. Acts ix. 29.

[8] Greek and Latin inscriptions placed near the gates of the inner court of the Temple warned foreigners that entrance to the sanctuary was forbidden on pain of death. One of these inscriptions was discovered by Clermont-Ganneau, and published by him in 1872 in the *Revue Archeologique*.

made haste to close the doors of the sanctuary, while Paul was dragged by his assailants into the outer court. At the hands of such men the worst treatment was to be feared, and Paul would certainly have been murdered by these fanatics unless the Roman soldiers had immediately interfered.

A Roman garrison, a cohort strong, commanded by a tribune, was permanently quartered in the fortress of Antonia at the north-west corner of the Temple platform. It was charged with the duty of guarding the courts and colonnades and keeping order there. At the smallest suspicious movement the alarm was given and the soldiers came down into the Temple court, which communicated directly with the citadel by a flight of steps.

The tribune—whose name was Claudius Lysias—being instantly warned of the disturbance, took with him centurions and soldiers, and made for that point of the crowd from which cries and shouts came. At the sight of the Roman police the men who were abusing and striking Paul released their victim. The tribune came up, and at his command the soldiers bound the man who seemed to be the cause of all the uproar. Lysias asked this man who he was and what he had done, but the confusion was so great that he could find out nothing for certain, and he ordered the prisoner to be taken into the fortress. In the meantime the crowd was swelling more and more; they uttered threats of death against the prisoner, and pressed on the soldiers from every side. When the soldiers had come to the bottom of the stairs leading to Antonia, the pressure of the mob was so strong that they had to take Paul in their arms and carry him up the steps to the entrance of the fortress. At this moment

the Apostle addressed the tribune: "May I say something to thee?" "Canst thou speak Greek?" asked the officer. "Thou art not that Egyptian who before these days raised a tumult and led into the desert four thousand murderers?" "I am a Jew," replied Paul, "of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. And I beseech thee, suffer me to speak to the people." Lysias had imagined that he had before him the adventurer who some time before had come from Egypt into Judæa, where he had excited a rebellious movement, by pretending to be a prophet; the rising had been sharply repressed by Felix, the procurator, but the impostor had succeeded in escaping.[9] Seeing that he had made a mistake, the tribune gave the prisoner permission to speak.

Standing at the top of the steps, Paul signified to the crowd, by a movement of his hand, that he wished to speak. After the first words, in the Aramaic language, their silence was complete, and their attention very close. Instead of explaining what he had come into the Temple to do, and showing that some of them had been grossly mistaken in regarding him as a desecrator of the holy place, the Apostle gave an unstudied defence of his ministry, going over the history of his conversion and his call to the Apostolate. The audience remained quiet till he came to the subject of his preaching to the Gentiles. But the bare mention of a mission to the pagans re-awakened their momentarily abated anger; the orator was at once

[9] Josephus relates this Egyptian's wild attempt in Ant. xx. 8, 6; Beel. Jud. ii. 13, 5. It was a Messianic movement, on the lines of the earlier ones of Judas of Galilee and Theudas.

interrupted and nothing was to be heard but cries of "Kill him! Kill him!" In their rage, those present took off their cloaks in order to wave them, and took up handfuls of dust to throw into the air. The tribune, anxious to prevent any violence, and not in the least understanding this new outbreak, apart from the fact that the prisoner must be a source of irritation, gave orders to have him taken into the citadel and put to the question. This sort of treatment was inflicted on slaves and those who were not Roman citizens. The soldiers bound Paul to a post, and were preparing to flog him, when he asked the centurion on duty: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman and uncondemned?" No other words could have produced such an effect as these did. The centurion ordered the flogging to be postponed, and hurried to inform his commanding officer. The tribune, in great surprise, returned to the prisoner, to question him on this all-important matter. "Tell me, art thou a Roman?" "Yes." "*I* obtained this citizenship with a great sum." "But I was born so." This was a plain answer. Lysias ordered the prisoner, suddenly transformed into a person of importance, to be unbound, and gave directions that he should be kept in the fortress till he had come to a decision about him. The case demanded some reflection. In view of the quality of the accused, the tribune ought to send him to the procurator's court, but still it was necessary to have some explanation of the disturbance in the Temple in order to draw up the indispensable report to the judge.[10]

Thinking that it was a quarrel of a religious character, Lysias resolved to bring Paul before

[10] Acts xxi. 27; xxii. 29.

the Sanhedrin. He gave orders for the supreme tribunal to be summoned for the morrow. The meeting nearly had a tragic conclusion. The prisoner had scarcely opened his mouth when the High Priest, Ananias,[11] who presided, ordered him to be struck by an attendant on account of some words which had seemed to him blasphemous. "God shall strike thee, thou whited wall!" cried the Apostle. "For thou sittest to judge me according to the Law, and contrary to the Law commandest me to be struck." The hearers protested indignantly against such a mode of address. "Thou revilest the High Priest of God!" "I knew not," replied Paul, "that it was the High Priest. For it is written: Thou shalt not speak evil of the prince of thy people."[12] This unfortunate incident could not but leave an unfavourable impression on the court. Moreover, the prisoner knew that the best possible defence would have no

[11] Ananias, the son of Nebedæus, had been raised to the high priesthood about 47, when Herod, King of Chalcis, still nominated the holders of this office. According to Josephus, he had been deposed before 52, i.e., before the arrival of Felix in Judæa. If this is correct, it still remains a fact that Ananias, as the same historian says, continued to exercise considerable influence at Jerusalem, and did so till the beginning of the great insurrection of which he was one of the first victims. Under these circumstances St. Luke might very well give him the title of high priest (Acts xxiii. 2; xxiv. 1), and all the more so as the title and office were both theoretically held for life.

[12] It is strange that Paul should have made such a mistake about the position of the man whom he addressed. The case becomes clearer, however, if we suppose that Ananias occupied only the second place, after the high priest then in office, who might have been Jonathas or more probably Ismael.

effect on the mind of his judges, the great majority of whom regarded him as a blasphemer and an apostate. Therefore, instead of defending himself, he conceived the idea of setting his judges at loggerheads with one another. The Sanhedrin was composed of Sadducees and Pharisees, and the two sects held opposite views on the subject of the resurrection of the dead. "Brethren," said Paul, "I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees; it is concerning the (Messianic) hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am called in question." No more was needed to divide the assembly: theological controversy blazed up, and at the same time the prisoner secured himself apologists among the Pharisees. The debate became so acrimonious that the tribune, realizing that the session would lead to no definite result, and fearing lest his prisoner should suffer an injury from some of the heated disputants, removed him from the hall and took him back to the Antonia. During the following night, the Apostle had a vision which brought him comfort in the midst of these painful ordeals: "Be constant," said Jesus to him, "for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." [13]

Meanwhile, the fanatics who had assaulted Paul in the Temple consulted together with regard to the best means to attain their ends. More than forty of them bound themselves by oath to kill the prisoner on the first opportunity that offered. A plan of action was formed immediately. The members of the Sanhedrin were to be induced to apply to the tribune to bring Paul before the council a second time, on the ground of fresh evidence;

[13] Acts xxii. 30; xxiii. 11.

the conspirators would take up a position between the fortress and the council-hall, and would kill the accursed man on the way. The plot had every prospect of success, provided only the secret were kept. But a young nephew of Paul's, who lived in Jerusalem, heard of the scheme, and hastened to warn his uncle. Paul asked the centurion who was on duty to take the young man to the tribune. On being informed of the design that was afoot against the prisoner, Lysias advised his informant to maintain perfect silence, and immediately decided to send Paul to Cæsarea under a strong escort: in this way, Jerusalem would be spared any further troubles, and the responsibility would be lifted from his shoulders. He gave orders accordingly, and that evening after dark a strong detachment of two hundred legionary soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred auxiliaries left Jerusalem and took the road to Cæsarea. The commander of the escort was the bearer of a letter written in the following terms: "Claudius Lysias to the most excellent procurator Felix, greeting: This man had been seized by the Jews and was going to be killed by them, when I came up with my troops and rescued him, understanding that he was a Roman. And wishing to know the reason why they accused him, I brought him before their council. I found that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or imprisonment. And as I have been told of an attempt that would be made on his life, I send him to you, telling his accusers to plead before you."

In the forenoon of the next day, the escort reached Antipatris, a fortified post which com-

manded the plain of Saron. The infantry went no farther, as an ambush was impossible in this open country. The same evening the cavalry drew rein at Cæsarea, in front of the old palace of King Herod, in which the procurator lived. The latter read Lysias' report, informed himself of the prisoner's birthplace, and ordered him to be kept under a strong guard, pending the arrival of his accusers.

Scarcely twelve days had passed since the Apostle had left Cæsarea with the delegates of the churches and Mnason the Cypriote; he returned there a prisoner, with chains on his wrists, and no comfort except his faith in his Master.[14]

II. In the Procurator's Court

The word of God is not bound. (2 Tim. ii. 9.)

Five days later the deputies of the Sanhedrin presented themselves in the court of Felix the procurator, who was a freedman of the Emperor Claudius and as notorious for his ambition as for his rapacity.[15] The deputation consisted of some of the Elders, with Ananias at their head. A pleader named Tertullus, probably an Italian, was associated with the delegates; he was to carry on the prose-

[14] Acts xxiii. 12-35.

[15] Tacitus's words about this parvenu have branded him for ever: "Antonius Felix, a cruel and vicious man, wielded a king's authority in the spirit of a slave" (*Hist.* V, 9). "Trusting in the enormous reputation of his brother, he imagined he could commit the worst atrocities with impunity" (*Ann.* XII. 54).

cution in accordance with Roman law, and to put forward the request of his clients that the prisoner should be sent back to be tried by his natural judges, that is, by the Sanhedrin, the only tribunal that was competent in religious cases, according to Jewish law.

Paul having been brought into the prætorium, Tertullus opened the case. Like a professional orator he began with some customary compliments, then he stated the charges brought by the Jews against the prisoner. He was one of the leaders of the sect of the Nazarenes, a fomenter of disturbances and seditions, a man as dangerous as the plague, well known for his anti-Jewish propaganda, and a desecrator of the Temple. Arrested in the act of committing sacrilege, he would have been judged according to Jewish law had not Lysias the tribune interfered, and removed him from the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin. When their advocate ceased speaking, the delegates gave their testimony to the accuracy and truth of the charges preferred against the accused.

The procurator then made a sign, and Paul began his defence. He utterly denied that he had caused any disturbance at Jerusalem, where he had gone as a devout pilgrim, to worship, to carry alms for his countrymen, and to offer sacrifices. Nobody could have seen him exciting disorder in the Temple, the synagogues, or the city. It was true he served the God of his fathers according to a particular "road," but this road was authorized by the Scriptures. It was some Jews from Asia who had found him in the holy place; these ought to have come before the procurator as accusers if they had any complaint against him, for the riot had been caused by them.

As for the representatives of the Sanhedrin, all that they could bring against him was that he had proclaimed his belief in the resurrection of the dead.

The two parties having stated their respective cases, the judge could give his decision. He did not give it. Felix, who had governed Judæa for several years, had already heard of the new faith, and was not ignorant of the profound division which had taken place in the Jewish world. All this turned on a religious controversy, which did not interest him. In his eyes the difficult point in the case submitted to him was the fact that the prisoner had been arrested in a popular disturbance. He considered that further information was necessary, which only Lysias the tribune was in a position to give him. This was the official reason for the adjournment. There was another, springing from cupidity: the procurator had good hopes of deriving some profit from a protracted case. There was nothing left for the representatives of the Sanhedrin to do but to go back to Jerusalem. As for the Apostle, he remained a prisoner; but his character of Roman citizen secured him a much milder treatment than that given to prisoners of ordinary status: his disciples could attend on him, his friends had access to him, and on occasions he was relieved of his chains.[16]

Some time afterwards, Felix returned from a journey, and again summoned Paul before him. The interview took place in the presence of his wife Drusilla, a young princess of the Herodian family, whom Felix had enticed from her lawful husband, and whose position, according to Jewish law, was

[16] Acts xxiv. 1-23.

notoriously irregular.[17] The procurator questioned the prisoner about the Christian religion, and appeared to take some interest in his replies; but when Paul began to speak of justice, continence, and the judgment of God, he interrupted him: "For the present, go thy way; but when I have a convenient time, I will send for thee." Other interviews followed. Felix continued to cherish the hope that Paul would offer to purchase his liberty with a heavy sum. Month after month passed without any further hearing of the case, against which the Jewish authorities were not inclined to complain, for it meant that the man whom they regarded as the worst enemy of Judaism remained a prisoner.[18]

Two years had elapsed since the arrest of the Apostle, when Felix was recalled and replaced by Portius Festus. As soon as the new procurator had taken possession of his province, he went up from Cæsarea to Jerusalem to visit the religious capital of the country, and to make the acquaintance of the leaders of the Jewish nation. It was an excellent opportunity for Paul's enemies: they asked for the removal of the prisoner to the Holy City, asserting the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin over him. This request concealed a detestable design: an ambush would have been planted on the

[17] Drusilla, the daughter of Agrippa I, and the sister of Agrippa II, and of the famous Bernice, had, although a Jewess, married a pagan prince, Aziz, King of Emesa. She might have been about fifteen years of age when she contracted this union in 51 or 52. Felix, being seized with a violent passion for her, had recourse to a Jewish magician, a native of Cyprus, to win her from her husband, in 54.

[18] Acts xxiv. 24-26.

road, in the mountainous region which it passed through, and Paul would have been assassinated. Festus replied that the accused must remain at Cæsarea as long as he had not been confronted with his accusers, in accordance with Roman law. He added that he himself would shortly be returning to his official residence, and asked the Jews to send delegates to carry on the prosecution.

Eight or ten days later, the procurator left Jerusalem. The day after his arrival at Cæsarea, he took his place on the judgment-seat to hear the two parties. For the second time the case was set forth on both sides in a public session, the Jews bringing forward the same charges as before, and Paul denying that he had committed any offence "either against the Law of the Jews, or against the Temple, or against Cæsar." Festus, perfectly realizing that it was a strictly Jewish and religious question, and desiring to respect the rights of the Sanhedrin, without any sacrifice of those of the prisoner, who was a Roman citizen, suggested to the latter that he (Festus) should try him at Jerusalem. But Paul flatly refused. Fearing, no doubt, that the procurator might sooner or later wash his hands of the case, and hand it over to the Sanhedrin, and that thus he would find himself no longer subject to the Roman jurisdiction, he spoke the decisive word: "I appeal to Cæsar." On hearing this, Festus consulted his council, and, the appeal having been recognized as permissible, he replied in the usual formula: "Thou hast appealed to Cæsar; to Cæsar shalt thou go." The die was now cast; there could no longer be any word said about his delivery to the Jews, nor any dispute about competence; the emperor alone had authority to decide

the justice of the case; the prisoner had to be sent to Rome.[19]

Some days had passed since the procurator's return to Cæsarea, when distinguished visitors arrived in the town to pay their respects to him: these were King Agrippa and his sister Bernice.[20] While discussing the local news with his visitors, Festus happened to mention Paul, explained the difficulty in which he had been placed by the request of the Jews of Jerusalem, and how the judicial proceedings had been suspended by the appeal to Cæsar, and added: "They brought against him some questions relating to their own religion, and to a certain Jesus now dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Agrippa's curiosity was excited, for he was interested in doctrinal questions that concerned Jerusalem, the nomination of the High Priest being in his hands. So he expressed a desire to hear Paul. Festus readily gave him an opportunity, and on the very next day the prisoner was brought into the audience hall, where the government officials and the most prominent men

[19] Acts xxiv. 27; xxv. 12.

[20] Agrippa II, the son of Agrippa I and the great-grandson of Herod the Great, was the brother of Bernice and Drusilla. Brought up at the Imperial court, he had received from Claudius, about 51, the small kingdom of Chalcis, which he had exchanged in 53 for the country to the east of the Jordan, between Damascus and the Jarmuk. A little later, about 56, Nero had assigned him some districts in Galilee and Peræa. Agrippa always lived on good terms with the procurators. His sister, Bernice, ten years older than Drusilla, lived with him—some said in incest, after deserting her third husband, Polemo, King of Cilicia. The name of this Jewish princess has become famous owing to the passionate love that she inspired in Titus.

of the city were assembled in honour of Agrippa and Bernice.

First of all, the procurator justified this fresh examination of the prisoner by pointing out that the opinion of a man so experienced as his guest would be invaluable to him in drawing up his report on the case. Then Agrippa invited Paul to make his defence. The Apostle related, under its usual form, the history of his early life and conversion, insisting on the harmony of the Christian faith with the Jewish teaching about the resurrection, and showing the agreement between his preaching and ancient prophecies. For long months he had had no opportunity of addressing such a numerous audience. As he recalled the most precious memories of his past life, the tone of his voice became more and more moving, and borne along by his natural impetuosity, he turned his defence into a missionary sermon. At last Festus interrupted: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." Thereupon, Paul appealed to the testimony of Agrippa, who was informed of the events that had taken place in Judæa thirty years before, knew the Scriptures, and could judge of the correctness of the facts put forward. But the king evaded this embarrassing challenge by an ironical answer, uttered in a playful tone: "A little more and thou persuadest me to be a Christian." "Would to God," answered the Apostle with spirit, "that by a little more or by much more, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day should become such as I also am, except these chains." As they left the hall, the company were all agreed in recognizing the prisoner's innocence, and Agrippa gave expression to the universal feeling when he said

to Festus: "This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Cæsar." [21]

III. From Cæsarea to Rome

As thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome. (Acts xxiii. 11.)

Paul's eyes were turned towards Rome. He was impatient to appear before the Imperial tribunal which alone could decide on his fate. For more than two years he had been waiting, wasting his strength in inaction; the thought of those thousands of pagans to whom the Gospel had not been presented, and of those many churches whose memory was faithfully preserved in his heart, caused him intense suffering. It is true that Philip and the Christians at Cæsarea had shown him every mark of affection; that his beloved disciples had sustained his courage by their faithful visits; that messengers had brought him news from Asia, Macedonia, and Greece; but energy like his demanded a boundless horizon, and a missionary field no narrower than the world.

When the group of prisoners to be sent to Rome had been collected, and the escort appointed, they waited for the sailing of a ship. It was near the end of summer, and a government ship which made the voyage directly could no longer be counted on. A vessel from Adramyttium in Mysia arrived at Cæsarea. As it was going to return to its own port by coasting round Asia, it was decided that the convoy should embark on it; in one or other of

[21] Acts xxv. 13; xxvi. 32.

the ports of call, there would be found a vessel sailing to Italy. The prisoners were therefore placed on board, together with the soldiers charged with their custody. The escort was commanded by a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the *cohors Augusta*. By the special permission of the procurator, Timothy, Luke, and Aristarchus were included in the party, nominally as Paul's servants.[22]

The commander of the detachment had received orders to treat Paul with gentleness, as a prisoner of good position. At Sidon he allowed him to land in order to visit his brethren.

From Phœnicia the vessel was to have sailed to Myra in Lycia. But a strong west wind was blowing, and instead of taking the direct route and leaving Cyprus on her right, she had to follow a northerly course in order to sail round the easternmost point of that island, and thence to tack along the coasts of Cilicia and Pamphylia, which took about a fortnight. Myra was an important port; numerous vessels from Alexandria called there. There was just then one which was starting for Italy. The centurion took all his people on board, and the voyage went on. The wind still impeded the vessel's course to the west. At the promontory of Cnidus, the captain tacked and allowed the ship to be driven towards the south-west in the direction of Crete, along the south of which island he coasted as far as Calilimenes (or Fair Havens). They were compelled to put in there, although the place was badly sheltered.

[22] The account of the voyage, incorporated by St. Luke in the Acts (xxvii-xxviii) has all the minuteness of a diary.

Meanwhile the fast of Kippur[23] was over, October was drawing near its end, and the time was beginning when navigation became dangerous. The captain was perplexed: a winter at Calilimenes involved serious risks, and on the other hand he could not venture out on the open sea without danger; he therefore decided to reach Phœnix, another port on the same coast, which had a roadstead well protected against the winds from the south-west and north-east. The centurion approved of this plan, whereas Paul, better acquainted with the treachery of the sea, was of a different opinion, and wished to remain at Calilimenes. But in the end it was decided that as soon as a favourable wind came, the ship's head should be turned to Phœnix. A southerly breeze having sprung up, the sails were spread, and they started for Phœnix, hugging the coast of Crete. The sailors were full of confidence, and everything was going well, when suddenly a storm arose. A terrible wind, well known to seamen, and called Euraquilo, blew in a hurricane from the north-east. They succeeded in taking in sail with difficulty, for the ship was now running before the wind over a mountainous sea. Near the small island of Cauda the sailors succeeded in taking on board the boat attached to the stern, and in strongly undergirding the ship to increase its resistance in case it should be stranded. A big drag-anchor was let down to retard the speed of the vessel. The following day the situation became more critical; they threw overboard a part of the cargo, and on

[23] The great fast of Kippur, or the Day of Atonement, came on the tenth day of the month Tisri, the seventh month of the Jewish year (roughly, from September 15th to October 15th).

the next day, yards, ropes, and sails. The storm continued unabated, with a sky in which no sun was to be seen by day or stars by night. As the ship was still running before the wind, the danger of being cast on the African coast became greater every day. The crew were exhausted, and the consternation on board was so great that nobody thought of eating. Paul alone remained calm during these dreadful hours, trusting in the word of God, who had told him that he should see Rome; he endeavoured to encourage the sailors and passengers by assuring them that they would escape safe and sound, in spite of the loss of the ship.

On the fourteenth night some of the sailors suspected that they were approaching land, no doubt because of the sound made by the drag-anchor. They took soundings twice, and found first twenty and then fifteen fathoms of water. Four anchors were hurriedly cast from the stern, to save the ship from going on the rocks. But it was still the depth of night, and the darkness only increased the danger. Under the pretext of letting down anchors from the bow, but in reality with the design of abandoning the ship and reaching the shore, the crew loosened the boat which was lashed to the bridge. They were just going to launch it, when Paul informed Julius the centurion of their intention. Without hesitation, the centurion ordered his soldiers to cut the ropes, and the boat drifted away. Next, they lightened the ship by throwing into the sea what remained of the cargo of wheat. At dawn the land could be distinguished quite close to them, but when the outline of the coast became more clearly marked, nobody

recognized the country to which the ship had come. Near them was a bay with a beach which seemed a suitable place for running the vessel ashore. The anchor-cables were cut, the fastenings of the steering-gear untied, and the foresail spread. The ship was driven in to shore, and the plan was on the way to success, when it ran on a sandbank; the prow became embedded in the sand, while the stern, buffeted by the waves, threatened to go to pieces. There was nothing left for passengers or for sailors except to get to land by swimming or with the help of a plank. The soldiers, who would answer with their lives for the prisoners committed to their charge, proposed to kill them in order that none of them might escape. But the centurion opposed this plan: Paul was not a condemned provincial, and his character of Roman citizen made him almost a person of consequence. At the centurion's order, they all threw themselves into the sea, the prisoners included. When the number was counted on the beach, they were in a position to admit that Paul's promise had been fulfilled: of the two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship, not one was missing.

Some of the inhabitants appeared, and the shipwrecked party learned that they were on the north-east coast of the island of Malta, at the extreme western limit of the sea, called by the ancients the Adriatic. The natives, men of Carthaginian origin for the most part, proved kind and hospitable. They quickly lighted large fires, round which the unlucky travellers gathered. The rain still went on, and moreover the cold was piercing, for it was now the middle of November.

A very curious incident almost immediately drew

the attention of the Maltese to Paul. Always eager to make himself useful, the Apostle began to collect dead wood for keeping up the fire. While throwing into the flames a handful of dry branches, he was bitten in the hand by a viper which the heat had roused. Without any sign of emotion, he shook the animal off into the fire. The islanders, who already knew that he was a prisoner, were struck with awe. "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer," they said to one another, "who, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance doth not suffer him to live." They expected him to fall down dead any moment. As Paul did not suffer any hurt, their surprise was so intense that they imagined he was a god.

The functionary who governed the island as the deputy of the proprætor of Sicily, and bore the title of *First Man* of Malta,[24] lived not far from where the party had landed. He showed them the same kindness as his subjects had done, and provided for their maintenance for three days. After that, measures having been taken by the captain and the centurion in preparation for a prolonged stay, the passengers and sailors, soldiers and prisoners could only wait for the return of the sailing season.

Paul's reputation rose still higher on the day when he cured the governor's father of a fever and dysentery. From various directions there came other sick men, who were similarly given relief. These wonderful cures secured the esteem and gratitude of the population for the Apostle and his companions, among whom was Luke the physician.

At the end of three months, say towards the close of February, the centurion embarked his soldiers

[24] The correctness of the official title noticed by St. Luke is confirmed by the inscriptions.

and prisoners in an Alexandrian vessel which carried the sign of the Dioscuri. The vessel had wintered at Malta, and her captain wanted to reach Italy at the earliest possible date. As the provision of corn for Rome was the first care of the Imperial administration, the speed of the corn-ships was encouraged by means of bounties. The *Castor and Pollux* set sail for Sicily. After a delay of three days at Syracuse, she reached Rhegium, and then Puteoli, where Julius landed his contingent. For the first time in his life Paul set foot on Italian soil. The goal of the journey was in sight.[25]

Puteoli had long possessed a Jewish colony, and for the last few years a small Christian community. Paul obtained the centurion's permission to visit his brethren, as he had done at Sidon, and he remained with them till instructions came from Rome regarding the destinations of the various categories of prisoners brought by Julius. At the end of a week they set out for the capital. The believers in Rome, warned of the imminent arrival of the Apostle, sent some of their number to meet him on the Appian Way. A group of them awaited him at Appius's Forum, and another at the Three Taverns. It was Paul's first meeting with the church of Rome, and this sign of kindness touched him profoundly.[26]

IV. Before Cæsar's Judgment-seat

But the Jews contradicting it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar. (Acts xxviii. 19.)

On arriving at Rome, the centurion handed over his prisoners to the officer in command of the *castra*

[25] Acts xxvii. 1; xxviii. 14. [26] Acts xxviii. 15.

peregrinorum, that is, the barracks where the centurion himself and his men were to be quartered. Paul was then led to the camp of the Prætorians, who had the custody of prisoners reserved for the emperor's court. His character of Roman citizen, and the favourable report delivered by Julius, secured him the same mild treatment as at Cæsarea. He received permission to lodge in the neighbourhood of the barracks, under the guard of a soldier.

Without loss of time, he resumed his Apostolic ministry, beginning with the Jews as his custom had been on all his missionary journeys. There was an important Jewish quarter at Rome. Being unable to attend the synagogue, the prisoner sent a message to the leading men of the ghetto that he desired to speak with them. They visited him at the house where he lived. Paul explained to them how he came to be a prisoner: that he had been delivered up to the Romans by his countrymen although he had done no injury to the Jewish nation nor offended against the customs of his ancestors. His visitors told him that they had received no letters from Jerusalem about him, and that they would be glad to hear him speak about this new doctrine which was everywhere meeting with violent opposition. A date was fixed, and on the appointed day the Jews returned in greater numbers than before. The conference lasted from morning till night. Paul set himself, according to his customary method of reasoning, to demonstrate that Jesus had fulfilled the Messianic prophecies in his own person, and that the preaching of the Gospel was leading to the realization of the kingdom of God. As usual, the hearers were divided, one side being convinced by the Apostle's argu-

ments, the other refusing to accept them. The meeting turned into a heated debate, so much so that the Apostle, carried away by indignation, hurled at his audience the apostrophe uttered once by Isaias to his hard-hearted nation which saw without perceiving and heard without understanding; Paul added that the Gospel preached to the Jews and rejected by them would be offered to the pagans, who had rightly superseded the natural heirs of the Divine promises.

Paul's imprisonment dragged on for two years, the Imperial judicial system being scarcely more expeditious than that of the procurator of Judæa. It was necessary, however, to await the arrival of the accusers, as the court would not give its decision till it had heard the witnesses, and the religious authorities at Jerusalem, fearing that the prisoner would be acquitted, had everything to gain by prolonging the process. During this period the prisoner could receive all the visitors who came to see him at his house, " preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, without prohibition." These, the last words of the *Acts of the Apostles*, are clear evidence that the Apostle enjoyed comparative freedom, and that the attitude of the Roman government towards his case gave him room to hope for a favourable judgment.[27]

Paul's words produced extraordinary results. The members of the Christian community at Rome came to see and listen to the man who had sent them the edifying and consoling letter. Among the pagans, conversions increased rapidly, especially among slaves, freedmen, and the poorer class of

[27] Acts xxviii. 16-31.

workmen. Christ won followers even in the Prætorian Guard, the Apostle having converted to the faith some of the soldiers who successively kept guard over him.[28] He himself was imitated in his missionary efforts by those of his disciples who had accompanied him; his teaching inspired them, his example supported them, his zeal animated them. Thanks to this work, the church of Rome in a short time made astonishing progress in fervour, and grew in numbers to such an extent as to excite the notice of the government.[29]

At the same time Paul continued to direct his churches in the East. Emissaries came and told him of the devotion of his converts to him, brought him news and assistance, and asked him for instructions. Of the letters written by the Apostle at this period, there remain to us the Epistles to the Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and the note to Philemon.

The Epistle to the Colossians seems to have been written during the early months of the Roman imprisonment. The church at Colossæ had not been founded by Paul. A certain Epaphras, a citizen of that town who had probably been converted by the Apostle during his stay at Ephesus, had gathered a group of Christians there. The youthful churches of Laodicea and Hierapolis, two other cities in the Lycus valley, also owed a great deal to Epaphras. He came to visit his master, either on his own initiative or as a delegate of the

[28] These conversions of Prætorians seem conclusively proved by a passage in the Epistle to the Philippians (i. 13).

[29] This growth of the Christian community at Rome explains the accusation made against the Christians by Nero at the time of the fire of 64.

Colossian church. He acquainted him with the state of things in the various places evangelized by him, where theosophical doctrines of a Gnostic type, but coloured with Judaism, were beginning to spread. Paul then wrote to the Colossians, to put them on their guard against these dangerous novelties, and to set forth to them some points of the Christian revelation regarding the person of Christ. He committed the letter to the hands of Tychicus, one of the Christians from Asia, who had accompanied him to Jerusalem at the end of his third journey. The bearer's commission included a visit to the churches of the province of Asia, for whom he had a sort of circular letter, differing little from that to the Colossians either in matter or form, a letter preserved in the Pauline collection under the name of the Epistle to the Ephesians. In addition, he was charged to take with him as far as Colossæ a slave named Onesimus who had run away from his master Philemon, had come to Rome, and had been converted by Paul. Paul sent the runaway back to Philemon with a note written with his own hand, in which he begged, in touching language, for the emancipation of his spiritual son. This letter to Philemon shows what a sway Paul exercised, even at a distance, over all who had ever known him.

The Epistle to the Philippians belongs to the later period of the Roman imprisonment. The Christians at Philippi, learning that the Apostle was a prisoner, had sent him some pecuniary assistance by one of their number, named Epaphroditus.[30] The action was the more generous inasmuch as the

[30] They had once before helped Paul with a gift, while he was preaching at Thessalonica (Phil. iv. 15, 16).

members of this church were men of very humble condition. Epaphroditus remained some time in Rome, helping Paul in his missionary work, and fell seriously ill. His fellow-citizens, hearing of this, were greatly distressed and insisted on his returning to Philippi as soon as he recovered. The Apostle could not refuse his consent to such a reasonable wish, more especially as his new assistant was equally desirous of seeing his brethren once more; this was the occasion of his sending to his friends at Philippi a letter in which expressions of gratitude are mingled with advice and encouragement.

In all these letters Paul looked forward with confidence to the result of his trial, and several times mentioned his intention of starting for Asia or Macedonia as soon as he was released. It appears that during his imprisonment his thoughts were specially occupied with the East. After two long years of waiting, he was at last acquitted by Cæsar's court; a verdict of insufficient evidence left the intrepid missionary free to resume the course interrupted nearly five years before. It was now the summer of 63.

CHAPTER XI

THE TESTIMONY OF BLOOD

I. The Last Journey

Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.
(1 Cor. xi. 1.)

CÆSAR'S court had not yet given judgment when St. Luke finished the composition of his second book to Theophilus; hence there is no mention in *Acts* of Paul's acquittal.[1] Moreover, as regards the close of the Apostle's career the historian has at his disposal only some very meagre and quite vague references contained in the so-called Pastoral Epistles, that is, the two letters to Timothy and the letter to Titus. It is therefore no easy task to reconstruct the history of the Tarsian missionary's last years. It is impossible to proceed very far

[1] The abrupt way in which St. Luke breaks off his narrative constitutes a practically insoluble problem if we date the composition of Acts later than the spring of 63. The close of the book (xxviii. 16-31) breathes of confidence and hope; the last word describes Paul's freedom of action. Can we suppose that the author would have been silent about a judgment which gave official sanction to this liberty if he had known of it when writing? On the other hand, if Paul had been condemned and executed after the two years' imprisonment, how are we to explain the peace and hope which pervade the last page of Acts and the fact that St. Luke, in that case, said nothing about his master's death?

without resorting to guess-work, and the wisest plan with such an obscure subject is to follow what appears to be the most probable opinion, fully acknowledging that even this is only inadequately established.

In what direction did Paul turn his steps when at last his prison doors opened? Some think that he immediately set out for Spain, in accordance with a plan formed several years before, and expressly mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans.[2] They produce some ancient authorities in support of their view. But the testimony of the Epistle of St. Clement, rhetorical as it is in form, is too vague to be conclusive; as regards the Muratorian Canon, it cannot be said that it represents a reliable tradition, and the authority of the apocryphal Acts of Paul amounts almost to nothing.[3] Seeing that, moreover, the letters of the years 61 to 63 not only show no adherence to this idea of a journey to Spain, but represent Paul as desirous of returning to the East,[4] there is every reason for thinking that

[2] Rom. xv. 24-28.

[3] About the year 96 a letter was sent by the church of Rome to that of Corinth. St. Clement was its author. Of Paul he said that " after having taught justice to the whole world, and *reached the farthest bounds of the West*, and borne his testimony before the rulers, he departed from the world and went into the holy place, having been found a notable pattern of patience " (v. 7). The Muratorian Canon is a Roman document dating from the close of the second century. It mentions Paul's departure for Spain (profectione Pauli ab urbe ad Spaniam proficiscentis), but it looks very much as if this detail were only a deduction from Rom. xv. 24-28. In the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, composed by a priest of Asia about 160-170, the writer has exploited indications found in canonical works.

[4] Cf. Philemon, 22; Phil. i. 25-26; ii. 23-24.

he had changed his mind since writing his letter to the Romans, and that, once liberated, he directed his course towards the Christian communities in Asia.[5]

In this his last journey to the countries washed by the Ægean, it is possible to fix some of his stopping-places, with the help of the references contained in the Pastoral Epistles.

Crete, situated in the very centre of the eastern Mediterranean, was on the sea route from Ostia or Puteoli to Asia Minor. The Apostle had spent some time there during the voyage to Rome, but as a prisoner. Nothing could be more natural than that he should return there to preach the Gospel in perfect freedom. The island had a large population, including several Jewish colonies, and its geographical position made it a strategical point for the dissemination of the Gospel. Once more the Jews resisted the preaching of Christ, and moreover Paul had to correct grievous faults in his Cretan converts, faults which old habits rendered particularly tenacious.[6] When he went away, he left Titus at the head of the churches founded in the island, with instructions to complete his work by establishing a council of Ancients for the government of each church.[7]

Ephesus likewise was visited by Paul,[8] and it

[5] Mgr. Duchesne favours the theory of Paul's journey to Spain : " On regaining his liberty, he made use of it, no doubt, to visit Spain, where the beginnings of Christianity seem to spring from his preaching " (*Histoire Ancienne de l'Eglise*, I, p. 59, 3rd ed., 1907). Père Prat has expressed himself still more definitely in the same sense in his various studies on St. Paul.

[6] Titus i. 10-16.

[7] Titus i. 5.

[8] 1 Tim. i. 3.

appears that he remained a considerable time in this city, where he had endured terrible sufferings and braved the gravest dangers. Christianity had made rapid and striking conquests there and Ephesus already vied with Antioch in the number and the rank of its converts. But this vitality was not without its disadvantages. In their thirst for knowledge the believers accepted too readily everything which seemed to supplement their early instruction; in addition, certain teachers, imperfectly instructed, or paying only lip-service to Christ, distorted the doctrine of the Apostles under pretence of completing it. Unauthorized preachers discoursed about genealogies, myths, the resurrection, and other equally obscure matters.[9] Too often, the weaker minds, or those not firmly settled in the faith, allowed themselves to be deceived, and charity continually received fresh wounds from the disputes and quarrels arising from this pernicious nonsense. Paul tried his best to put the faithful on their guard against this Judaizing gnosis, which was very closely related to the speculations already condemned by him in the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. Against the false teachers he had to take stern measures, and certain individuals among them, such as Hymenæua, Philetus, and Alexander, were excommunicated by him.

It is probable that the Apostle took advantage of his stay at Ephesus to carry out the promise he had made to his friend Philemon, and that he visited the Lycus valley in which, at a short distance from one another, stood the cities of Colossæ, Hierapolis, and Laodicea. He had long been expected in this district, which had been evangelized by his assistants,

[9] Cf. 1 Tim. i. 3-19; iv. 1-11; vi. 3-5; 2 Tim. ii. 14-18.

and his authority stood as high in it as if he had preached there in person.

When writing from Rome to the Philippians, Paul had mentioned his hope of seeing them again. On leaving Ephesus, he took his way to Macedonia, through Troas, and Neapolis,[10] and visited the line of churches strung together by the Via Egnatia. He went on as far as Nicopolis in Epirus and decided to make a long stay there.[11] It was at this point that he wrote to Titus, to give him various directions relative to the pastoral ministry and to tell him to rejoin him immediately after the arrival in Crete of Tychicus or Artemas. The first letter to Timothy must be dated from the same period. When he left Ephesus, Paul had committed to Timothy the government of that great church. It is evident that his young assistant was a little frightened at such a responsibility, especially as he had to carry on the struggle against the false teachers, and to defend himself against the attacks of those who had been excommunicated. The letter which his master sent to him is a veritable code of church government, in which fatherly advice and words of encouragement are interspersed among the disciplinary regulations. These pages prove in their writer a consummate experience of men and affairs, and a most extraordinary practical sense.

After passing the winter of 66 at Nicopolis, the Apostle doubtless travelled towards the Ægean, while Titus was sent by him into Dalmatia. Some months later, we again find him at Rome, a prisoner for the second time. Where was he arrested? By whom, and in what circumstances? These are questions which will remain for ever unanswered.

[10] 1 Tim. i. 3. [11] Titus iii. 12.

We only know that on his way he called at three places: at Troas, where he was the guest of a certain Carpus, with whom he left his cloak, books, and parchments;[12] at Miletus, where his companion Trophimus had to be put ashore on account of illness; and at Corinth, where Erastus, another of his fellow-workers, remained behind.[13]

II. The Martyrdom

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. (2 Tim. iv. 7.)

In the gloom of his prison (for we have now no reason to suppose a condition of partial freedom, such as he experienced in his first imprisonment) Paul wrote to his dearest disciple a letter which may be regarded as his spiritual testament: this is the Second Epistle to Timothy. He endeavours to inspire with courage and constancy the man whom he had placed at the head of the church of Ephesus, he gives him further instructions on the attitude to be taken in regard to preachers of heresy, and he commands him to come to him as soon as possible for he has a feeling that his end is near. "For I am even now poured out in libation, and the time of my departure is at hand . . . I have finished my course. . . . For the rest, the crown of justice awaits me."[14] He closes with a last appeal to his beloved son: "Make haste to come before winter."[15]

Like anybody else who is going to die, the

[12] 2 Tim. iv. 13.
[13] 2 Tim. iv. 20.
[14] 2 Tim. iv. 6-8.
[15] 2 Tim. iv. 21.

Apostle, during those last weeks of his earthly pilgrimage, stood in need of the affection of those who were dearest to him. With the exception of Luke, however, his friends were far away, scattered in various provinces, and detained by their missionary work. An Ephesian named Onesiphorus had succeeded, not without difficulty, in gaining access to the Apostle in his prison, and attended him with touching devotion;[16] but others, such as Demas, had deserted him.[17] As regards the Christians of Rome, they had hardly emerged from the terrible persecution which Nero had initiated in 64, in the course of which some hundreds of believers had been martyred. Peter, who had arrived in the capital about the time of Paul's liberation, had ended his life in one of these savage executions. For several years the survivors of the Roman church had to remain in hiding in order to escape the sword, the fire, or the teeth of wild beasts. In those calamitous days, when the mere profession of Christianity was interpreted as a crime against the State, ruthlessly punished with death, the hearts of the most courageous were benumbed with fear, and there were very few among the faithful who dared to visit their brethren lying in the prisons.

Paul, suffering greatly from this unavoidable isolation, waited calmly, but without any illusions, for the sentence of the Imperial tribunal: his eyes were fixed on the supreme Judge in whom he had placed his trust, and who was keeping for him the incorruptible crown promised to the victorious athlete.[18]

[16] 2 Tim. i. 16-18.
[17] 2 Tim. iv. 10.
[18] 2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 8.

We cannot say if Timothy arrived in time to see his master. History is silent about the Apostle's last days. The one indisputable fact is that he was condemned as a Christian, and delivered the testimony of blood to him who had appeared to him on the road to Damascus, and had appointed him the apostle and the teacher of the Gentiles. Being a Roman citizen, he would die by the sword.

According to the Roman tradition, the execution took place three miles from the city walls, near the road to Ostia.[19] The martyr's remains were taken up by pious hands and deposited in a Christian cemetery. Eusebius of Cæsarea, the earliest of the ecclesiastical historians, dates Paul's martyrdom in the year 67.[20]

At the very time when the intrepid missionary reached the end of his career at Rome, and empurpled with his blood the country of the Cæsars, there were appearing in Palestine the first symptoms of a terrible crisis which was destined to shatter at once the cradle of Christianity, and the stronghold of orthodox Judaism. At the end of 66 rebellion had laid its hand on Judæa, and Jerusalem had risen

[19] The place was formerly called Wholesome Springs (Aquæ Salviæ). At the present day it is known as the Three Fountains. Tertullian, Eusebius, Lactantius, St. Jerome, etc., say explicitly that Paul was beheaded.

[20] In his *Chronicon*, Eusebius gives the year 67, the last year but one of Nero's reign. It is true he refers also, in his *Church History* (II, 25) to Nero's persecution, a fact which makes us suspect a mistake on his part, for this persecution began after the burning of Rome (July, 64). But the persecution went on for several years; the fire had only been the occasion for taking action against the adherents of a new religion which was unlawful and was considered a danger to the State.

against the Empire. Four years later, the Temple was destroyed and the Holy City razed to the ground. By this time the inheritance of the mother-church of Jerusalem had already passed to Rome: the double martyrdom of Peter and Paul had made her the capital of the Christian world.

CHAPTER XII

THE GENIUS AND MIND OF PAUL

And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me.
(Gal. ii. 20.)

THE figure of Paul, the preacher of the Gospel and Apostle of the Gentiles, dominates the history of the first Christian generation, as his thought has dominated the history of Catholic theology for nineteen centuries. Whichever way we turn during the forty years which elapsed between the death of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem, we see everywhere in the background the strong figure of the Apostle. And again, among all the theological works, ancient and modern, in which the belief of the Church is set forth, there is not one from which the influence of Pauline thought is absent. This man who filled the world with his activity during his lifetime, has not ceased, since his death, to rouse the intellect and kindle the heart of those who have read his wonderful epistles: the words written by his pen have transmitted his power down to us, and will continue to transmit it—who can say how much further?—after our time. He remains the greatest of the doctors, the one whose doctrine is so rich and profound that the most subtle and most powerful minds have never succeeded in mastering it completely, much less in improving on it. In order to realize what he was and what he did, to know

him not merely outwardly, but from within, to understand the influence exercised by him during his life, and the attraction of his thought, which quickly became a magnet to draw all believers, it is indispensable to have lived in touch with his spirit, heart, and mind. A study of his career as an Apostle is not sufficient to give this esoteric knowledge; there must be a direct and prolonged acquaintance with the letters which remain, for they contain the best evidence of his consuming activity, the most genuine expression of his faith, and the most faithful reflection of his deepest feelings.

The man who with perfect justice has been awarded the title of "thirteenth Apostle" had not followed Christ along the roads of Galilee and Judæa, but Christ revealed himself to him on that day when he withdrew him at one stroke from the midst of Judaism in order to make him his ambassador among the heathen nations, and this revelation on the road to Damascus was followed by many others.[1] On the new way in which his feet were placed, successive visions from above made known to Paul the work which he had to accomplish, and at the same time enabled him to pierce into the most profound mysteries of the Christian religion, and to make them gradually his own. This continuous action of the Divine light on the intellect and will of the Apostle was the root principle of his spiritual life and of his missionary

[1] "To this end have I appeared to thee," said Jesus to him, "that I may make thee a minister, and a witness of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things wherein I will appear to thee" (Acts xxvi. 16). For the later revelations see Acts xvi. 6, 7; xviii. 9; xx. 22, 23; xxii. 18; xxiii. 11; 1 Cor. xi. 23; xv. 51; 2 Cor. xii. 1-4; Gal. i. 12; ii. 2; Eph. iii. 3.

method; under this influx of grace his natural faculties were developed and elevated to a higher level, and this fruitful alliance of two activities closely intertwined in one strong personality was the source of his genius. This is not too strong a word: we may speak of Paul's genius just as we speak of that of Plato, or of St. Augustine, or of Michael Angelo, or of Newton.

We have seen that he had a poor body, at least as far as appearances went. But however that may be, it was controlled by an iron will, for during thirty years it supported a ceaseless physical strain of the severest kind. Neither threats nor dangers nor obstacles could check the man who had been chosen by God to be the pioneer of the Gospel; an irresistible impulse drove him to carry out his task; he could not but go forward. In less than a quarter of a century he had sown the seed of Christianity in Cyprus, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achæa, Italy, Crete, and Epirus.

The preacher of a divine religion, and the "ambassador of Christ," he served with proud generosity the Master who had made him his herald and minister. Before the Jews and the Gentiles, as before the representatives of the Roman power, his bearing and his language were always worthy of the message which he brought and of the cause for which he stood. In his exposition of the Gospel teaching, and in his defence of his ministry, in his words and in his thoughts, no subterfuge or reservation ever had a place: such practices would have seemed to him an offence against the truth, and no better than blasphemy or treason.[2]

[2] Cf. Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17; 2 Cor. ii. 17; iv. 1, 2; v. 20; Eph. vi. 20.

Even when he is in irons, he reminds Timothy that the Gospel should be preached with both confidence and pride, and he chooses this moment to proclaim that "the word of God is not bound." [3]

By temperament Paul was inclined to put forward his ideas firmly and authoritatively. His early training only accentuated this natural inclination. After his conversion, the certainty which he had of possessing the truth, and his feeling towards this truth implanted in his soul, gave his teaching and his actions a still more unqualified character. He has sometimes been represented as a man of self-willed, irritable, passionate and violent character, because only certain actions and words of his, susceptible of this interpretation, have been remembered. It is true his uncommon and forceful personality compelled men's notice by its very nature; it is true his strong and tenacious will ultimately triumphed over moral resistance as it did over material obstacles; it is true his convictions were so deeply rooted in his soul that he defended them with warmth and even with passion; it is true he demanded from his assistants absolute docility and would not tolerate any difference between their views and his; it is true, finally, that he showed himself terrible to his enemies, whose secret designs and crooked manœuvres were well known to him; but these are just the proper characteristics of a leader who knows and wills, and we ought not to lose sight of the circumstances, often desperate and always hard, under which the Apostle had to exercise his ministry. Nature had fashioned him for the first place; in a subordinate position he would not have

[3] 2 Tim. i. 7, 8, 12; ii. 9, 15; iv. 2. See also 1 Thess. ii 5, 6.

realized his full possibilities of action; to work freely, he must have elbow-room; he must have a clear field and a wide horizon. Hence he was most careful not to "build upon another man's foundation." [4] For the same reasons he kept as his fellow-workers only men trained under his own eye and using his own methods. Titus and Timothy may not have been so many-sided as Barnabas or Apollos, but their work was an extension of Paul's and, in these early years of Christian preaching especially, unity of control was one of the conditions of success. Under the impetus given by such a leader, who constantly risked his own life, and preached by his example, subordinates of even mediocre gifts quickly became lieutenants of the highest quality, capable of supporting their master or, if need be, of taking his place.

If we admire in Paul the qualities which go to make a great conqueror, such as his sure insight into a situation, his swiftness both in attack and counter-attack, his power of quick decision, and his skill in the choice of objectives, we must not forget that he gave proof of the same gift in the organization of the conquered territory. The most brilliant victories would have led to nothing if he had not firmly secured his work step by step as it progressed, by creating united and disciplined societies in the centres where he had won souls to the faith and cause of Christ. His constant aim was to govern personally the churches he had founded, either by writing, or sending deputies to them, or by visiting them himself. Far from giving them up to other guides, he always laboured to keep a watch over them and to direct them during their growth, retain-

[4] Rom. xv. 20.

ing them in his own guardianship whether he was far away or near.

His principal merit, in the eyes of the historian of primitive Christianity, lies perhaps in the fact that he recognized at once, and more clearly than the other missionaries, the universal character of the religion of Jesus. There can be no doubt that, from the beginning of his apostolate, he had this tremendous idea of the whole human race converted to the new faith, of a community of believers covering the whole world, of a society of Christians drawn from all nations, and united together by the ties of the closest solidarity, a solidarity based on the sacrifice of a Divine Saviour. It is true his creed differed in no respect from that of the Apostles who immediately after Pentecost announced the Gospel of Jesus to the Jews of Jerusalem; hence there never was any question of two Gospels, that of the Twelve and that of Paul; but the very ruling principle of Christianity, namely universal redemption or the offer of salvation to all men without distinction, stamped itself on his mind with such force that from the very first he deduced from it conclusions which led him where the others hesitated to go. By making a clean sweep of the ancient privileges of Israel, and by enabling the newly-born Church to detach itself from the Synagogue, he led Christianity to define itself more sharply and to enter resolutely on the path marked out for it by its founder. He was responsible for that severance without which the new religion would never have been able to conquer the world. On the other hand, nobody suffered as he did from the obstinacy and blindness of his countrymen, for he was bound to them both by blood and by feeling. He would

never believe that God had rejected his people for ever. In his view the apostasy of Israel was only temporary, and providentially permitted in order to procure the salvation of the Gentiles; in the end, the chosen race was destined to be once more the object of God's mercy. It is with this thought, and in this hope that he prayed for his unbelieving brethren: "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew," he wrote to the Romans, ". . . as concerning the Gospel indeed, they are enemies for your sake; but as touching the election, they are most dear for the sake of the fathers. . . . The will of my heart, and my prayer to God is for them unto salvation." [5]

Paul's mind worked by intuition, and herein lay the originality of his genius. For him, religious truth was the object of contemplation; his mind grasped it by direct vision and not by way of reasoning; the great revealed truths of which he had such full understanding, presented themselves to his intellect without the medium of symbols or images. His thought began and ended in God, and in the world of supernatural realities, where it moved as in its native element; this direct and abiding contact with the Divine strengthened and enriched it, and gave it that double note of certitude and clearness which a merely discursive knowledge could never bestow to the same extent. The many successive revelations with which the Apostle was favoured, mark the culminating points of this constant and progressive illumination of his mind by the light from above. Paul carried out to perfection the

[5] Rom. x. 1; xi. 1, 2, 28. Chapters ix-xi of this epistle treat of the problem of the unbelief of the Jews.

ideal of the great mystics, by living continually under the action of this light, his eyes fixed on it in order to receive it more fully, and in the contemplation of these spiritual realities, his glance turned towards them in order to pierce more deeply into them. This is the explanation of that natural tendency of his mind, to keep always on the heights, or to regain them with a rapid flight whenever it has come down from them either to follow the course of an argument or to develop a doctrinal or disciplinary theme.

From the fact that intuition played a preponderant part in Paul's religious and intellectual life, it would not be right to infer that his reasoning power, in the strict sense, was inactive or ineffective. If his reason did not create any of the ideas which made up "his Gospel," it organized and systematized them in a coherent and harmonious whole; it translated them into a precise language, and gave them in many cases the appearance of a perfect logical structure. It is desirable then to assign its proper part (but that quite a secondary part) to that ratiocinative power without which the Apostle would not have been such a vigorous dialectician as he shows himself in the great epistles, and more especially in the Epistle to the Romans. His mastery in dialectic cannot be sufficiently admired. He excelled in antithetical reasoning in which his mind, braced and stimulated by opposition of ideas, concentrated on a higher principle, and then progressed with irresistible logic and crushing force. It was evidently by the play of reason that he arrived at such a result; but in the exercise of this faculty he never ceased to base himself on the truths made visible to his intellect by his close

union with God and by his direct contact with the supernatural world.

Paul was no less great in heart than in intellect. Paul's heart, as St. John Chrysostom said, was the heart of Christ. The Apostle was not content with loving his disciples and his converts in God; he discovered God in each one of them and encircled them all with an affection at once tender and unforced. Living the same life as they did, sharing their joys and sorrow, working at their side, relieving their physical and moral necessities, making himself little in order to be better understood even by the humblest among them, he lived among them like a father among his children.[6]

At the hour of parting, when he had to leave them, his heart was really torn. He carried faithfully in his soul the memory of those he had left, and when he wrote to them he could not find words expressive enough to tell them his devotion to them. To the Thessalonians: "We became little ones in the midst of you, as a nurse cherishes her children: so desirous of you, we would gladly impart to you not only the Gospel of God but also our own lives, because you were become most dear to us." To the Corinthians: "But I will most gladly spend and be spent myself for your souls; although loving you more, I be loved less." To the Galatians: "My little children, of whom I am in labour again until Christ be formed in you, and I would willingly be present with you now." To the Philippians: "For God is my witness how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." [7]

We cannot be surprised that such a man should

[6] 1 Cor. ix. 19-23.
[7] 1 Thess. ii. 7, 8; 2 Cor. xii. 15; Gal. iv. 19, 20; Phil. i. 8.

have exercised an extraordinary attraction on those around him, and should have awakened in others a friendship as deep as he lavished on them. Paul was loved by his helpers and converts as very few masters have been loved by their disciples. He thus experienced the great consolation of seeing his feelings understood and shared. Indeed he has himself expressed the comfort which he found in these signs of devotion, whether they came from the converts of Galatia, or from the ancients of Ephesus, from the Philippians or from the Corinthians, from Aquila or Onesiphorus, from Luke or from Timothy.

At the root of this love which Paul felt for those whom he had begotten to the Christian faith, there is the noble and fruitful idea of spiritual brotherhood. In his view, all Christians belong equally to Christ whose mystical body they constitute; ransomed and saved by the same redeeming act, living by the same life, participating in the same sacrifice, they are equal before God, as being the children of the same father. Owing to the fact of the Divine Filiation, in which all participate without distinction, and in the same measure, each of them should be regarded by the others as a brother and treated as such; peculiarities and differences which are based on flesh and blood, on birth and fortune, are abolished and therefore cannot invalidate the principle of Christian brotherhood and equality proclaimed by the Saviour and inscribed by him in the charter of the new society.[8] The Gospel spirit is the spirit of love towards Jesus, and of love towards our neighbour. Thus Paul

[8] 1 Cor. xii. 12-27; Gal. iii. 26-28; Rom. xii. 4-6; Eph. iv. 15, 16.

incessantly impressed on the believers the practice of charity. This word is continually in his mouth. This virtue crowns all the others and at the same time sums them all up. In his first letter to the Corinthians he extolled fraternal charity in a chapter in which we can feel all the fire of his heart and to which we can add nothing.[9] It is he, too, who has left us that maxim at once tender and graceful: "Owe no man anything but to love one another." [10]

Last of all, if we are to solve the mystery of the power which animated and sustained Paul, of the inspiration which guided him and of the influence which he exercised, we must penetrate into the centre of his being, into his soul, where grace grew and spread like a tree planted in rich soil.

From the day when he met Christ on the road to Damascus, his one idea was to imitate him, to live with him and for him, to identify himself with him. From that moment he laboured constantly to reproduce in himself each trait of the Saviour's personality, and to approach nearer and nearer to the object of his love. In his own language, he had been apprehended, captured, by Christ;[11] instead of following him like a prisoner, and abandoning himself passively to his captor's power, he wished his soul to be the living image of his Master's. To attain this end, he had to wage a fierce war against himself, and his letters have preserved an awe-inspiring echo of these inward battles.[12] But step by step the old man gave way to the new man, and Paul could say with perfect truth: "With Christ

[9] 1 Cor. xii. 31—xiii. 13. See also on charity, Gal. v. 13-15; Rom. xiii. 8-10; Phil. ii. 1-4; Col. iii. 12-14.
[10] Rom. xiii. 8.
[11] Phil. iii. 12.
[12] Cf. Rom. vii. 14-25.

I am nailed to the cross, and I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me." [13] The consciousness of his own weakness disappeared before his confidence in him who lived in him: "I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me," he wrote to the Philippians.[14] The union of his soul to Christ was so close that he could not imagine anything capable of weakening or destroying it: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or persecution, or the sword? . . . I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [15]

Paul was born to be a zealot after the style of those who were buried under the ruins of the Temple, or who killed one another in the fortress of Masada rather than fall alive into the hands of the Romans; the grace of Christ made him an Apostle of the new faith, the most fervent and the greatest.

[13] Gal. ii. 19, 20.
[14] Phil. iv. 13.
[15] Rom. viii. 35-39.

PAULINE CHRONOLOGY

THE chronology of St. Paul's life, like the chronology of the life of Christ, can only be settled by indirect methods, for the *Acts* and the *Epistles* give no definite dates for the various events in the Apostle's career. To make up for this want of precise indications, or this absence of an independent chronology, we must have recourse to the method which enables us to fix the date of many events in ancient history. This method consists in making the most of the synchronism every time that a clear relation can be established between an event whose date is known and another, undated, event. Now, it happens that certain events in Paul's life stand in a chronological relation to some dated events of secular history; hence the latter serve as points of departure for fixing the date of the former.

Seeing that in a subject of this sort we must necessarily make use of approximations, and that these approximations are sometimes based on mere probabilities, the danger of error cannot be eliminated, at least not completely. That is to say, it is impossible to arrive at results which are absolutely certain. A chronological problem usually admits of several solutions, among which we have to choose the one that appears the most probable.

For the establishment of the chronology of St. Paul's life we possess a number of data:[1]

[1] For a detailed discussion of the dates given here, see Prat, *La Théologie de Saint Paul*, 9th ed., I, 471-485 (Eng.

1. Probably the martyrdom of St. Stephen (Acts vii. 58) did not take place till after the recall of Pilate (in the spring of 36).

2. It is very unlikely that Aretas, the Nabatean king, should have had Damascus in his jurisdiction (2 Cor xi. 32) before the accession of Caligula (in March, 37).

3. The martyrdom of St. James (Acts xii. 1, 2) precedes by only a short time the death of Herod Agrippa I.

4. Herod Agrippa I died in the spring of 44. (Acts xii. 23.)

5. The famine under Claudius (Acts xi. 28) seems to have occurred when Tiberius Alexander was procurator of Judæa (45-48 or 46-48).

6. Claudius's edict ordering the expulsion of the Jews from Rome (Acts xviii. 2) should most probably be dated 49 or 50.

7. The proconsulate of Sergius Paullus in Cyprus (Acts xiii. 7) is anterior to 51.

8. Gallio entered on his office as proconsul of Achæa (Acts xviii. 12) about the middle (May or June) of 51 or of 52. The duration of this office was one year.

9. Felix the procurator did not marry Drusilla (Acts xxiv. 24) before 54.

10. Festus replaced Felix as procurator of Judæa

Tr. 397-409); C. H. Turner's article, *Chronology of the New Testament*, in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, I, 415-425; W. M. Ramsay, *Pauline and other Studies*, 345 ff.; Zahn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 3rd ed., 1924, II, 639-656; Goguel, *Essai sur la Chronologie Paulinienne*, in the *Revue d'Histoire des Religions*, LXV, 285-339, and his *Introduction au Nouveau Testament*, IV, 1, 81-115, and 2, 383-391.

(Acts xxv. 1) between 56 at the earliest, and 60 at the latest, and most probably in 59 or 60.

11. St. Paul suffered martyrdom in 67. This date is given by Eusebius in his chronicle and it seems highly probable.

If we connect these data with the indications given in the Acts and in the Pauline Epistles, we obtain the following table:

Recall of Pilate, deposition of Caiaphas, martyrdom of St. Stephen, conversion of Saul	36
Paul at Jerusalem (first visit)	39
Paul in Cilicia	39-42
Paul at Antioch with Barnabas	43
Paul and Barnabas at Jerusalem, martyrdom of St. James, imprisonment of St. Peter, death of Herod Agrippa	44
Departure on the first journey	Spring 45
Return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch	48
Paul and Barnabas at Antioch	49
Council at Jerusalem	49 or 50
The quarrel at Antioch	50
Departure on the second journey	Spring 51
Paul at Corinth	52
Paul before Gallio	53
Paul at Jerusalem	Spring 54
Departure on the third journey	Summer 54
Paul at Ephesus	55-57
Paul at Corinth	Winter 57-58
Paul at Philippi	Spring 58
Paul at Jerusalem, his arrest	Pentecost 58
Imprisonment at Cæsarea	58-60
Departure for Rome	September 60
His voyage, his stay at Malta	Winter 60-61
First imprisonment at Rome	Spring 61 to Spring 63
Paul in the East	63-66
Paul at Nicopolis	Winter 66-67
Second imprisonment and martyrdom	67

The next page contains a comparative table of the dates proposed by Father Fernand Prat,

Theodor Zahn, Adolf von Harnack,[2] Eduard Meyer,[3] and Maurice Goguel.[4]

	Prat	Zahn	Harnack	Meyer	Goguel
Resurrection of Christ	29	30	30	28	28
Conversion of Saul	36	35	31	30	29/30
Paul at Damascus and in Arabia	36–38	35–37	31–34	—	30–32
Paul's first visit to Jerusalem	38	38	34	—	32–33
Paul in Cilicia	39–43	38–43	35–41	—	—
Barnabas finds Paul at Tarsus and takes him to Antioch	43	43	41	—	—
Persecution of Agrippa I. Dispersion of the Apostles	44	44	42	44	44
Death of Agrippa I.	44	44	44	44	44
First missionary journey (Cyprus, Pisidia, Lycaonia)	45–48	50–51	42–47	44–46	44–48
Council of the Apostles	49	52	48	43/44	44
Disagreement at Antioch	49	50	—	47	—
Second missionary journey (Galatia, Macedonia, Achæa)	50–52	52–54	48–51	48–52	48–51
Claudius's edict against the Jews	49	52	49	49/50	49
Paul at Corinth: trial before Gallio	50–52	52–54	51	50–52	50–51
Third missionary journey	53–57	54–58	51–55	54–59	52–57
Paul at Ephesus	53–56	55–57	51–54	55–57	—
Paul at Corinth	56–57	58	54–55	58	—
Arrest of Paul at Jerusalem	57	58	55	59	57
Paul a prisoner at Cæsarea	57–59	58–60	55–57	59–61	57–59
Removal of Paul to Rome: the voyage	59–60	60–61	57–58	61–62	59–60
Paul a prisoner at Rome	60–62	61–63	58–60	62–64	60–?
Last missionary journey (Spain? the East)	62–66	63–66	60–64	—	—
Nero's persecution	64	64	64	64	64
Martyrdom of St. Peter	66–67	64	64	64	—
Martyrdom of St. Paul	66–67	66–67	64	64	?

[2] Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*, 4th ed., III, 552-554.

[3] E. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* (1921) III, pp. 41, 84, 170-173, 196, 204, 206, 420, 438.

[4] For the works of Prat, Zahn, and Goguel, see the note on p. 209.

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